



WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR  
taken during his last years at Florence  
*From a photograph formerly in the possession of the  
Rev. Gordon Tidy*

# LANDOR

## Poetry & Prose

with SWINBURNE'S poem  
and Essays by  
ERNEST DE SELINCOURT  
WALTER RALEIGH, &  
OLIVER ELTON

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With an Introduction and Notes by  
E. K. CHAMBERS

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AT THE CLARENDON PRESS  
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# CONTENTS

Walter Savage Landor (1861), from a photograph	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Introduction . . . . .	v
Landor's Life . . . . .	xviii
Bibliographical Note . . . . .	xxi
Algernon Charles Swinburne's <i>In Memory of Walter Savage Landor</i> . . . . .	xxiii
From Ernest de Selincourt's <i>Imaginary Conversations. A Selection</i> . . . . .	xxv
From Sir Walter Raleigh's <i>On Writing and Writers</i> . . . . .	xxxii
From Oliver Elton's <i>The English Muse</i> . . . . .	xxxiv

## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR'S POETRY AND PROSE

Tamar's Wrestling . . . . .	2
Enallos and Cymodameia . . . . .	5
To Corinth . . . . .	10
Corinna to Tanagra . . . . .	11
Verses of Mimnermus . . . . .	13
The Death of Artemidora . . . . .	13
Iphigeneia . . . . .	14
On Ternissa's Death . . . . .	16
A Friend to Theocritus in Egypt . . . . .	16.
Hellas . . . . .	17
Regeneration . . . . .	18
On War . . . . .	19
Ireland . . . . .	19
Walter Tyrrel and William Rufus . . . . .	20
Wisdom of Life and Death . . . . .	26
On Himself . . . . .	31
Ianthe . . . . .	51
Rose Aylmer . . . . .	59
Rose the Second . . . . .	60

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The Three Roses . . . . .	65
To Miss Isabella Percy . . . . .	66
Lady Blessington . . . . .	66
Elizabeth Arundell . . . . .	68
On Books and Writers . . . . .	68
Leofric and Godiva . . . . .	85
Roger Ascham and Lady Jane Grey . . . . .	91
Lord Brooke and Sir Philip Sidney . . . . .	94
Edmund Spenser and the Earl of Essex . . . . .	111
Young Wellerby . . . . .	120
Peleus and Thetis . . . . .	122
Achilles and Helena . . . . .	126
Oration of Pericles to the Soldiers round Samos . . . . .	132
Oration of Pericles on the Approach of the Lacedaemonians to Athens . . . . .	134
Pericles on His Life . . . . .	136
The Counsels of Anaxagoras . . . . .	138
Aspasia to Cleone . . . . .	140
The Death of Acciaïoli . . . . .	142
The Dream of Boccaccio . . . . .	143
The Dream of Petrarca . . . . .	147
Wisdom of Life and Death . . . . .	150
On Literature . . . . .	160
On Himself . . . . .	167
Notes . . . . .	170

## INTRODUCTION

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR is rather a lone figure in the literary life of the first half of the nineteenth century. Like Shelley, and like Byron, he came from a class of society which did not, as a rule, greatly concern itself with the things of the mind. He was the eldest son, by a second marriage, of Walter Landor, who practised as a physician at Warwick, but had also a landed estate at Rugeley in Staffordshire. His mother, Elizabeth Savage, whom Landor, without justification, liked to believe descended from Arnold Savage, the minister of Henry IV, had inherited from grand-uncles others at Ipsley Court and Tachbrook in Warwickshire. All these properties were entailed upon Walter, who therefore lived from boyhood in expectation of considerable wealth. He had brothers and sisters, of whom one, Robert Eyres Landor, himself became a writer of some merit.

The family tradition was Whig, in reaction against the middle-class domination of George III and William Pitt. Walter himself was early taken with the ideas of French republicanism, which he never wholly discarded, although they combined rather oddly with an essentially aristocratic temper. This showed itself early in an impatience with all restraint, which remained characteristic of him throughout his life. He was sent to school at Rugby, but had to be removed at 16 for want of discipline. He matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, where he was thought 'a mad Jacobin', and refused to powder his hair. In a year's time he was rusticated for the offence, hardly democratic, of firing across the quadrangle at the shutters of a fellow undergraduate, who had a party of 'raffs' and 'servitors' in his rooms. He went off to Wales, where in the previous

long vacation he seems to have become involved in an intrigue with a local girl. A refusal to return to Trinity led to a quarrel with his father, and he went for a time to London. A reconciliation was effected, through the mediation of one Dorothy Lyttleton, an heiress whom he might probably have married, but for the bad reputation he had acquired. His father gave him an allowance, and for the next three years he lived partly in Warwick, and partly in Wales, where in 1794 he wrote *Gebir*, and in 1798 met Rose Aylmer, who died two years later in India, and whose memory inspired one of his best poems. During 1799-1802 he was again largely in London, interesting himself in Anti-Pitt politics and trying his hand at journalism in the *Morning Post* and *Courier*. A visit to Paris at the end of 1802 gave him a profound dislike of Napoleon Bonaparte, and thereafter he dropped active politics, although he continued to regard himself as a republican. During the next few years he lived the life of a young man of fashion and expectations in Bath, Clifton, and other watering-places. At one of these, perhaps as early as 1802, he had met Ianthe, who became the love of his lifetime and the subject of much of his best verse. She was an Irish girl, Sophia Jane Swift, already engaged to her cousin Godwin Swift, whom she refused to give up for all Landor's ardent entreaties, and married in 1803. He died in 1814, and two years later she remarried with the Comte Leppetier de Molandé.

Landor's father died in 1805 and he inherited Rugeley. He became tired of his desultory life, and wanted a home. Loweswater, in the Lake country, failed him. But he was smitten with Llanthony in Monmouthshire, once the seat of a Benedictine abbey, of which ruins remained. He sold Rugeley and persuaded his mother to sell Tachbrook. During the negotiations he went to Spain in 1808, as a volunteer against the French. But a home meant a wife. At a ball in Bath he declared, 'That's the nicest girl in the

room, and I'll marry her.' She was Julia Thuillier, the penniless daughter of an unsuccessful Swiss banker. The marriage took place in May 1811. Landor had been planting woods at Llanthony and building a house. It was not yet finished, and only uncomfortable lodgings in rooms contrived among the old abbey buildings were available. For a time the situation pleased Landor. 'I have made a discovery', he wrote, 'which is that there are both nightingales and glowworms in my valley. I would give two or three thousand pounds less for a place that was without them.' Probably his wife felt the enchantment less. Troubles, moreover, soon arose with Landor's tenants, who robbed him, with the judge in charge of the assizes, and with the Lord Lieutenant, who refused to put him on the commission of the peace. By 1813 the enchantment was over. Landor went to Jersey and saw Llanthony no more. Then came a first quarrel with his wife, who refused to accompany him. But she relented, and together the pair wandered during 1814-21, from Tours to Milan, Como, Albaro, Pisa, Pistoia, and finally Florence, where they lived for some years, first at the Palazzo Medici and then the Villa Castiglione. There were visits also to Rome and Naples. During this period Landor's children Arnold, Julia, Walter, and Charles were born and he began his principal work in prose, the *Imaginary Conversations*.

In 1829 Landor was enabled, by a generous loan from one Joseph Ablett, to buy the Villa Gherardesca at Fiesole, and here, but for a brief visit to England in 1832, he had on the whole much happiness for several years, writing his books, playing with his children, whom he adored, and with the nightingales, which the Italians thought only fit for food, quarrelling with his neighbour over water-rights, planting his gardens with innumerable roses, cypresses, vines, arbutuses, and bay-trees. Many visitors came to see him, in 1829 Ianthe, now again a widow, and in 1835 her

half-sister, Mrs. Paynter, with her children. With Ianthe he set mimosas about a spot which he had chosen for his tomb. But with Ianthe came also trouble, which ended in tragedy. Mrs. Landor showed jealousy, and by 1835 she had taken to herself a younger lover. Landor left her and his adored villa, went first to Lucca, where he wrote his *Pericles and Aspasia*, and in September returned to England alone.

After three months spent with Ablett in Wales, Landor now resumed the desultory habits of his earlier years. For a time he had a cottage in Clifton, where he enjoyed the companionship of Southey, who was paying a visit to the place. It is possible that Ianthe was also living there, but I am not clear as to the evidence. In 1837 she went to Austria, where she remained for some years. Landor himself had been in Germany during 1836, hoping to meet his children there, but in that he was disappointed. On his return he took a house in Bath. But, whatever his headquarters, he wandered a good deal in many parts of the country, and often visited London, where he usually stayed at Gore House with Lady Blessington, whom he had known at Florence. He now for the first time met John Forster, who was destined to become his biographer, and a little later Robert Browning. At Bath itself were Mrs. Paynter, and her daughter Rose, who later married Charles Graves-Sawle of Restormel in Cornwall. It is in his letters and verses to Rose that we see Landor at his very best. He had visits from his children, and from his daughter the gift of his dog Pomero, long a faithful companion. He still wrote much, publishing his *Pentameron* in 1837, and his *Collected Works*, which were by no means final, in 1846. And he became a frequent contributor, on political and other subjects, to *The Examiner*, on which Forster was employed.

This Indian Summer of Landor's career ended in tragedy.

During 1858 a generous attempt to do a service to an ill-used girl involved him in a libel action, which he could not defend. He made over what remained of his property to his eldest son, and went back to Italy, hoping to resume his life at the Villa Gherardesca. Here he found his wife and children living in disrepute, and ill-disposed to welcome him. After a short period of misery, he fled on a burning June day to Florence. Here he was fortunate enough to find the poet Robert Browning, then living at the Casa Guidi. Browning and his friend W. W. Story, an American painter, took him to Siena, and finally settled him in lodgings at Florence, with an old servant of the Browning family. But on the death of his wife in 1861 Browning left Italy, and Landor remained, petulant and uncomfortable, occasionally visited by his sons, much concerned about the preparation of a grave in which he hoped to be buried at Widcombe, near Bath, and about the fate of a collection of pictures, many of them very bad, which he had made, and finding his chief consolation in teaching Latin to a young American girl, Kate Field. Almost the last event of his life was a visit from the poet Swinburne in 1864. On May Day he said to his landlady, 'I shall never write again. Put out the lights and draw the curtains.' And a few months later he died, to be buried, not after all at Widcombe, but in the English cemetery at Florence.

Landor's relations with the other great writers of his day were rather remote. He was of no school. 'I claim no place in the world of letters', he declared in 1853, 'I am alone, and will be alone, as long as I live, and after.' Oddly enough, the contemporary who most attracted him was the one who now appears to us the least significant, Robert Southey. They had been contemporaries at Oxford, but Southey had avoided Landor as a mad Jacobin. Both Southey and Coleridge had, however, been impressed by 'the Gebir-man' in 1800, and a meeting between Southey and Landor at



Bristol in 1808 led to an enduring literary and personal friendship. Southey, wrote Landor to Rose Paynter in 1839, is 'the most perfect of mortals, at least of men mortals'. Of Coleridge he knew little. In 1831 he wrote, 'I am in the habit of considering Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey as three towers of one castle, and whichever tower falls must shake the other two.' They first met during Landor's visit to England in 1832, when Crabb Robinson took him to Highgate, and recorded that 'Landor and he seemed to like each other. Landor spoke in his dashing way, which Coleridge could understand.' But in old age Landor said, 'I have no desire to meet Coleridge as a celestial being.'

The intercourse between Landor and Wordsworth amounted to a tragedy. Southey had told Landor much about his friend at Como in 1817, and a correspondence had followed, in which Landor had praised the *Excursion*, and Wordsworth the *Imaginary Conversations*. The first meeting was again in 1832. Wordsworth thought Landor 'a warm-hearted man', and Crabb Robinson said that Landor's love for Wordsworth was intense. Landor coupled Wordsworth with Milton as greater lyric poets than Pindar, and in 1833 wrote on him the noble Ode in which, after recalling Milton, Shakespeare, Dryden, Chaucer, and Spenser, he concluded:

I wish them every joy above  
That highly blessed spirits prove,  
Save one—and that too shall be theirs,  
But after many rolling years,  
When 'mid their light, thy light appears.

They met again in London during 1836, and Landor wrote in Dora Wordsworth's album the lines which run:

Glorious the names that cluster here  
The loftiest of our lofty ile,  
Who can approach them void of fear  
Tho Genius urge and Friendship smile.

To lay one stone upon the hill,  
And shew that I have climb'd so high,  
Is what they bid me. Wordsworth's will  
Is law, and Landor must comply.

A few days later the poets were present together at the first night of Thomas Talfourd's *Ion*. And now Landor, rightly or wrongly, took it into his head that Wordsworth had depreciated the poetry of Southey—said that he would not give five shillings the ream for it. He rushed into verse, and quoted the offending statement in *A Satire on Satirists*, to which he appended a note, charging Wordsworth with plagiarizing in the *Excursion* an image from his own *Gebir* of a sea-shell, which when shaken and applied to the ear,

remembers its august abodes,  
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.

The *Satire* was printed, but on Crabb Robinson's advice not published. It came, however, to Wordsworth's knowledge, and he wrote briefly about it to Southey, refusing for Landor's sake to comment. In fact the valuation of Southey's poetry at less than five shillings had been not his but Byron's. In a conversation with Crabb Robinson on their way to Italy during 1837 he denied any obligation to Landor for his passage on the sea-shell. It is difficult, however, not to feel that Landor's lines must still have been in his mind, unconsciously at least, when he wrote his own. The breach of friendship was never made up. In 1837 Landor mocked at Wordsworth in his *Malvolio*. In 1842 an *Imaginary Conversation* between Southey and Porson, contributed by Landor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, was taken, although not, I think, intended by Landor, to be again depreciatory of Wordsworth. Southey died in 1843, and Landor thought that Wordsworth was remiss in giving help to his widow. 'Wordsworth,' he said, 'is a strange mixture of sheep and wolf, with one eye on a daffodil and the other on a canal-share.' And now Edward Quillinan, Words-

worth's son-in-law, stepped into the fray, with a mock *Imaginary Conversation*, also contributed to *Blackwood's*, which was in effect a prolonged invective against Landor. Wordsworth was no party to this, and said of Quillinan,

He knew very well that I should have disapproved of his condescending to notice anything that a man so deplorably tormented by ungovernable passion as that unhappy creature might eject. His character may be given in two or three words: a mad-man, a bad-man, yet a man of genius, as many a mad-man is.

It is fair to add that Landor's critical integrity was not affected by the personal alienation. In one of the last of his *Imaginary Conversations*, that between himself and Julius Hare, there is much discriminating appreciation of the merits of Wordsworth's poetry, at its best.

Lamb, like Southey and Coleridge, had read *Gebir*, when it made its appearance. Naturally he could not refrain from punning on it as Gibberish. But this was not inconsistent with admiration. Crabb Robinson wrote to Landor in 1831,

I find your poems lying open before Lamb. Both tipsy and sober he is ever muttering *Rose Aylmer*. But it is not these lines only that have a curious fascination for him. He is always turning to *Gebir* for things that haunt him in the same way.

It was again in 1832 that Landor and Lamb met for the first, which proved the last, time. There was a little correspondence afterwards. But Lamb died in 1834, moving Landor to write his two exquisite elegies on their brief friendship. With Scott he seems to have had no personal relations, although he thought well of his novels. Shelley, also an early admirer of *Gebir*, he had seen at Pisa, but he regrets 'We knew each other little.' And Keats he apparently never saw. But he commemorates both of them in lapidary verse. Byron he heartily disliked, and Byron returned the compliment, calling him in *Don Juan* 'that deep-mouthed

Boeotian Savage Landor'. Browning and Swinburne form a link between his old age and our own time.

Landor's temperament as a man remained much what it had been in boyhood. A good deal of the aristocrat clung to him, although he was no rider or sportsman, and declared that he preferred to discourse with men of intellect rather than men of rank. A cousin reports, however, that 'the smallest unintentional appearance of slight, from a superior in rank, would at any moment rouse him into a fury of passion, never thoroughly allayed till its last force had spent itself in an epigram'. He was throughout life a creature of impulses. 'Nothing I do, whether wise or foolish', he told Southey, 'will create much surprise in those who know my character.' He was a born individualist. 'An unsubduable old Roman' Carlyle called him in his latter days. He had no control of his temper. The slightest opposition or mishap evoked torrents of violent speech, which soon gave way to Homeric laughter. His laughter was notorious. 'He laughs like an ogre', said Mrs. Browning, who was not so fond of him as her husband was.

But Landor had his good as well as his bad impulses. 'He is like a stormy mountain pine that should produce lilies', said Leigh Hunt. A story told of him in Florence was at least *ben trovato*. Angered with his cook for producing a bad dinner, he threw the man out of a window. A moment later, he was smitten with remorse. 'Good God!' he said as he ran to the window, 'I forgot the violets.' With women whom he admired he was at his best. Forster describes his attitude in the presence of Ianthe.

In language, manner, look, voice, even in the minutest points of gesture and bearing, it was all that one could possibly imagine of the perfection of chivalrous respect.

Kate Field, too, found him 'chivalry incarnate'. His correspondence with Rose Paynter has an enduring charm. He loved children, pictures, animals, flowers, and birds. Even

as a boy he would never take a bird's nest. His appearance in old age was dignified. More than one writer describes it as 'leonine'.

Landor's writings, whether in prose or verse, are a clear mirror of his temperament, although at his desk he was often able to attain to a serenity of expression which was not his in daily life. Pen in hand, he could recall to his imagination the great figures of antiquity, philosophers, statesmen, and warriors, to whom he felt himself akin. The *Imaginary Conversations* are a long bead-roll of them. Greece gave him Pericles, Solon, Demosthenes, Sophocles, Lucian, Aesop, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus. From Rome, perhaps even more congenial to his temper, came Marcellus, Scipio, Cicero, Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Lucullus; from Italy Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Galileo, Macchiavelli, Fra Lippo Lippi; from France Montaigne, Bossuet, Agnes Sorel, Joan of Arc. These are but samples only from Landor's well-stored gallery. In English history and literature, too, he was widely read, and from them he drew abundantly. Leofric talks with Godiva, Richard I with an Abbot of Boxley, John of Gaunt with Joanna of Kent, Edward I with William Wallace, Henry IV with Landor's supposed ancestor Arnold Savage, Henry VIII with Anne Boleyn, Queen Elizabeth with Mary Tudor, Burghley, and others, Mary of Scotland with Bothwell, Oliver Cromwell with Walter, who should be Michael, Noble, Lady Jane Grey with Roger Ascham, Bacon with Richard Hooker, Spenser with Robert, Earl of Essex, Philip Sidney with Fulke Greville, Lady Lisle with Elizabeth Gaunt, Milton with Marvell, Isaac Newton with Isaac Barrow, Izaak Walton with Charles Cotton, Admiral Robert Blake with a rather mythical brother Humphrey, Samuel Johnson with Horne Tooke, Lord Chesterfield with Lord Chatham, William Pitt with George Canning. These are only samples. Landor's range is a wide one. It must be admitted that most of his characters rather tend to talk

Landor. Sometimes he is himself an interlocutor, discoursing now with the Abbé Delille, now with one of his friends in real life, Southey or Julius Hare. Southey appears again in two dialogues, of very different dates, with Richard Porson. Akin to the *Conversations*, although of greater length and somewhat different in method, are the *Pericles and Aspasia*, which is largely written in letters and speeches, with much interspersed verse, ascribed to Greek poets whose names survive, and the *Pentameron*, which has a good deal of continuous narrative. Of *Pericles and Aspasia* Landor wrote, 'I had no books to consult. The characters, thoughts and actions, are all fictitious.' Perhaps the least successful of Landor's prose works is the *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*, which throws no light on the poet, and is rather poor fooling, but for one beautiful narrative, which has nothing to do with the poet. Landor is not at his best when he attempts to be humorous.

It is in the personalities that he is interested, rather than the cosmic process, which history represents. Sir Walter Raleigh puts the point well.

Landor cared little for philosophy and much for history, which he saw as a great and stately pageant. He liked the great *shapes* of historical events.

And he is often discursive, letting his puppets leave their own affairs to discourse on life in general or on points of natural beauty, as the mood takes him. These are not the worst passages in the *Conversations*. For a tender or delicate phrase of description or contemplation Landor is incomparable.

Critics will, I suppose, always differ as to whether Landor is at his best in poetry or in prose. I am myself for the poetry. But, whatever form he adopts, his qualities and defects remain the same. He writes from impulse, and is wanting in craftsmanship. He has no architectonic power. In *Gebir* and in most of his longer narrative poems in blank

verse there is much dignity of language, but little lucidity. He plunges *in medias res*, and it is often difficult for the reader to discover what it is all about. Some of the shorter pieces, which he classed as *Hellenics*, are free from this defect, and are of great beauty. But it recurs in his dramas; the early *Count Julian*, the Spanish trilogy made up of *Andrea of Hungary*, *Giovanna of Naples*, and *Fra Rupert*, and the later Italian *Siege of Ancona*, are all unreadable. The logical process, from an issue set at the beginning, through complications, to a final catastrophe, is lacking. Landor's mind, indeed, was not detached enough to achieve the give and take of drama, except perhaps in a short dialogue, such as that between Walter Tyrrel and William Rufus. *Count Julian* was a disappointment to him. He wrote it, he said, 'shedding many tears', and Southey found in it 'some of the finest touches, both of passion and poetry, that I have ever seen'. But a drama must be good as a whole, or it is good for nothing. There was an idea of putting *Count Julian* on the stage, but it proved impracticable. Browning alone thought Landor a great dramatic poet, and dedicated his *Luria* and *A Soul's Tragedy* to him.

It is upon his numerous short pieces, lyric or elegiac in temper, that Landor's reputation as a poet must mainly rest. Many of them were written to or in recollection of the beloved Ianthe, others, in his later years, to Rose Paynter. Others, again, are more impersonal in tone, with a delicate touch on natural beauty, or on the great issues of life and death. This kind of verse suited his temperament, for in it the initial impulse is all. He is our great master of the English epigram. It is not the epigram of the Roman Martial, satirical and often ribald, although of this too he could avail himself when he chose, but rather the reflective epigram, as we find it so abundantly in Greek poetry, where it had its origin in actual inscriptions on tombs or sacred places, but later came to be used more generally, both for

the delicacies of amatory and social intercourse, and for more abstract contemplations. Always, however, it retained something of what has been called its 'inscriptional' quality, being sometimes limited to a single couplet, and rarely, in its best periods, extending to more than seven. How far Landor was familiar with the Greek *Anthology* I cannot say. Something at least he must have known of one of its best writers, Simonides of Amorgos, since he gave the name *Simonidea* to one of his own volumes. At any rate there was a congruity of temper. Many examples of this will be found in the selection which follows.



## LANDOR'S LIFE

- 1775. Born at Warwick (30 Jan.), eldest son of Walter Landor, M.D., by his second wife, Elizabeth Savage.
- 1779. Sent to school at Knowle, Warwickshire
- 1783. Transferred to Rugby School.
- 1791. Removed from Rugby for want of discipline (Dec.).
- 1792. Pupil of William Langley, at Ashbourne, Derbyshire. Matriculated from Trinity College, Oxford (Nov.).
- 1793. Oxford (Jan.). Tenby in Wales (autumn).
- 1794. Rusticated from Trinity for want of discipline (June) Goes to Wales (Tenby, Swansea, Bala) and Cornwall (St. Ives). Writes *Gebir* at Swansea. Refuses to return to Trinity (Dec.). Quarrels with father. Leaves Warwick for London.
- 1795. Beaumont St., Portland Place, London (Jan.-Apr.). Correspondence with Dorothy Lytton of Studley Castle, Warwickshire. Reconciliation with father. *Poems of W. S. L. Moral Epistle to Earl Stanhope*. Begins unsettled life, partly at Warwick, but largely in Wales (1795-8).
- 1796. At St. Clear's, Carmarthen (Oct.).
- 1798. Meets Rose Aylmer at Swansea. *Gebir*.
- 1799. At Malvern (June, Oct.).
- 1799-1802. Mainly at Warwick and London. Dabbles in anti-Pittite and republican politics. Writes for *Morning Post* and *Courier*.
- 1800. *Poems from the Arabic and Persian Iambi*.
- 1801. At Oxford (July). Perhaps Nov. or in 1802 meets Sophia Jane Swift (Ianthé), who marries (1803) cousin Godwin Swift.
- 1802. Visits Paris (Aug.-Dec.). Disenchanted with Napoleon. Abandons active politics. *Poetry by the Author of Gebir*.
- 1803-10. Further unsettled life, largely at Bath, Clifton, and other fashionable resorts.
- 1805. Father dies (Nov.). Inherits property at Rugeley, Staffordshire.
- 1806. *Simonidea*.
- 1807. Desires a home. Visits English Lakes, but fails to acquire Loweswater. Gets option on Llanthony Abbey, Monmouthshire.
- 1808. Meets Southey (Apr.). Goes to Spain as volunteer against French (Aug.-Nov.).

- 1809-10. Completes purchase of Llanthony. Begins planting woods and building house.
1811. Meets Julia Thuillier (Jan.). Marries her (May). Takes her to live at Llanthony.
1812. *Count Julian*.
- 1812-14. Troubles with tenants and county authorities at Llanthony.
1813. Leaves Llanthony, and goes to Swansea (Oct.).
1814. Goes to Jersey (March) and, after quarrel with wife, Tours (Oct.).
1815. Wife rejoins him (c. Sept.). Goes to Milan and Como (Oct.).
1818. Son Arnold born (March). Goes to Albaro (Sept.) and Pisa (Nov.).
1819. Goes to Pistoia (spring). Returns to Pisa (autumn).
1820. Daughter Julia born (March). *Idyllia Heroica Decem*.
1821. Goes to Palazzo Medici, Florence (summer). Begins *Imaginary Conversations of Literary Men and Statesmen*.
1822. Son Walter born (Nov.).
1824. *Imaginary Conversations* (vols. i, ii).
1825. Meets Hazlitt (March). Son Charles born (Aug.). Goes to Villa Castiglione.
1826. Visits Rome (Jan.). Meets Lord and Lady Blessington (June).
1827. Visits Naples (Aug.).
1828. *Imaginary Conversations* (vol. iii).
1829. *Imaginary Conversations* (Second Series). Goes to Villa Gherardesca, Fiesole. Mother dies (Oct.). Ianthé visits Fiesole.
1831. *Gebir, Count Julian, and Other Poems*.
1832. Visits England. Meets Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb (May-Aug.).
1834. *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*.
1835. Mrs. Paynter visits Fiesole (March). Breach with wife. Leaves Villa Gherardesca (Apr.). Goes to Lucca. Returns to England (Sept.).
- 1836-57. Mainly at Clifton and Bath, with many visits to London (especially Blessingtons at Gore House) and elsewhere.
1836. *Pericles and Aspasia* (March). Meets John Forster (May). Begins contributions to *The Examiner*. Visits Germany (July-Oct.). *A Satire on Satirists* (Dec.). Breach with Wordsworth.
1837. *Pentameron and Pentalogia*. Meets Rose Paynter.
1838. Meets Dickens (May).
1839. *Andrea of Hungary and Giovanna of Naples*.
1840. *Fra Rupert*. Meets Browning (March).

1841. Visits Paris (May). Son Walter in England (June–Oct.).  
1842. Son Arnold in England (June–Sept.).  
1843. Son Walter and daughter Julia in England (May–Oct.).  
1844. Daughter gives him dog Pomero.  
1846. Rose Paynter marries Charles Graves-Sawle (Feb.). *Collected Works*, with *Hellenics*.  
1847. *Hellenics*, enlarged.  
1849. Death of Lady Blessington (June).  
1850. Meets Carlyle (Aug.).  
1851. Death of Ianthe at Versailles (31 July).  
1853. *Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans. Last Fruit Off an Old Tree*.  
1854. Sister Elizabeth dies (Feb.).  
1856. Pomero dies (March).  
1857. Makes will (May).  
1858. *Dry Sticks*. Leaves England on account of libel action against him. Goes to Fiesole.  
1859. Family life at Villa Gherardesca proves impossible. Befriended by Browning at Florence (June), and, with W. W. Story, at Siena (July). Lodgings found for him in Via Nunziatina, Florence (Dec.).  
1860. Visits Siena with Browning (June).  
1861. Browning leaves Italy (Aug.).  
1863. *Heroic Idyls*.  
1864. Visit from Swinburne (March). Dies at Florence (17 Sept.).

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

AN edition of Landor's *Works*, not quite complete, was published by John Forster in 1876, and another by C. G. Crump in successive instalments of 1891-1901. More comprehensive is that of T. E. Welby and S. Wheeler (1927-36). Wheeler also did a separate edition of the *Poems* (1937, Clarendon Press). *Gebir* and the *Hellenics* are in the Temple Classics (1907). An early selection is that by G. S. Hillard (1856, Boston, Massachusetts). Both verse and prose are well represented in that of S. Colvin (1882). Verse alone is in those of W. M. Dixon (1883, T. H. Ward's *English Poets*, vol. iv) and E. Radford (n.d., *Canterbury Poets*). Some of the best of the *Imaginary Conversations* are gathered by E. de Selincourt (1915, 1937, World's Classics). Others were reprinted, sometimes with omissions, by Havelock Ellis (1886, 1889), together with *The Pentameron* (1889), and *Pericles and Aspasia* (1890). *The Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare*, and the *Conference of Spenser and Essex* appeared in an anonymous print (1891).

The most complete *Life* of Landor is still that of John Forster (1869), less fully given in his edition of 1876. Valuable also is M. Elwin, *Savage Landor* (1941), which makes use of some material not available to Forster, or not fully treated by him. Shorter accounts are by S. Colvin (1881, 1902, *Men of Letters*) and Sir Leslie Stephen (1892, 1909, *Dictionary of National Biography*). S. Wheeler edited *Letters and Other Unpublished Writings of W.S.L.* (1897), and *Letters of Landor, Private and Public* (1899), and H. C. Minchin *W. S. L. Last Days, Letters and Conversations* (1934). A *Bibliography* (1919) is by Wheeler and T. J. Wise.



# ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

*In Memory of Walter Savage Landor (Poems and Ballads, 1866)*

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,  
The bright months bring,  
New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,  
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,  
Filled full of sun ;  
All things come back to her, being free ;  
All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot  
Flowers that were dead  
Live, and old suns revive ; but not  
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,  
Far north, I hear  
One face shall never turn to me .  
As once this year:

Shall never smile and turn and rest  
On mine as there,  
Nor one most sacred hand be prest  
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,  
Half run before ;  
The youngest to the oldest singer  
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find  
Till all grief end,  
In holiest age our mightiest mind,  
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,  
If hope there be,  
O spirit that man's life left pure,  
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were  
Look earthward now ;  
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,  
The imperial brow ;

Come back in sleep, for in the life  
Where thou art not  
We find none like thee. Time and strife  
And the world's lot

Move thee no more ; but love at least  
And reverent heart  
May move thee, royal and released,  
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust  
Receive and keep,  
Keep safe his dedicated dust,  
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,  
Mix with thy name  
As morning-star with evening-star  
His faultless fame.

## ERNEST DE SELINCOURT

*Imaginary Conversations. A Selection (1915)*

LANDOR'S literary reputation rests most securely upon his prose. But though he realized from the first that prose was his 'study and business', he was in no hurry to establish his pre-eminence. He was a poet of rare distinction, if not of fame, at twenty-five years old; he was nearly fifty when, in 1824, he produced the first series of his *Imaginary Conversations*. 'All strong and generous wine', he tells us, 'must deposit its crust before it gratifies the palate', and in his earlier prose, discursively critical of politics, literature, and society, still more perhaps in his verse, his experience of life and his command over the resources of language can alike be seen attaining to mellowness and maturity. The Imaginary Conversation was a form of art most clearly suited to bring out the best elements in his genius and to minimize the worst. He had not that feeling for construction, that clear consecutive manner, necessary to a writer of good narrative or complete drama. When he takes upon himself to tell a story in prose he often tells it badly; when he should keep to one point he is liable to wander from it. A striking image, a stirring reflection such as may come to him at any moment from some side-light upon his subject, is apt, when the emotion is not tense, to take him off his chosen track into some alluring by-way. But such is the way of conversation, which is most fruitful when its course is least rigorously controlled. Landor loved dialogue for its 'facility of turning the cycle of our thoughts to whatever aspect we wish'. Moreover, it responded to a distinctive quality in his genius. He was constitutionally incapable of clear abstract thinking; but when, in the manner of the dramatist, he could merge his personality in that of other men, thoughts would flash upon him like sparks struck out from the contact of mind with mind, of character with



character. 'It has always appeared to me', he says, 'that conversation brings forth ideas readily and plenteously, and that the ideas of one person no sooner come out than another's follow them, whether upon the same side or the opposite.' Landor drew out his own thoughts upon the same principle. And he delighted to justify his method by precedent. 'The best writers of every age', he reminds us, 'have written in dialogue: the best parts of Homer and Milton are speeches and replies: the best parts of the great historians are the same: the wisest men of Athens and of Rome converse together in this manner, as they are shown to us by Xenophon, by Plato, and by Cicero.' And to this method he remained faithful. To the *Imaginary Conversations* he added throughout the rest of his life, till they numbered one hundred and fifty. Of his other prose writings, *The Citation of William Shakespeare* and the *Pentameron* are protracted dialogues with narrative interspersed, and *Pericles and Aspasia* was composed in the form of intimate and intimately connected letters which, like all correspondence worthy of the name, are of the nature of conversation conducted from a distance.

The range of characters whom Landor reveals, and through whom he reveals himself, is unrivalled by any other author. Most felicitous, perhaps, in his delineation of ancient Greece and Rome, of the Italy of the Renaissance, and of his native land from Plantagenet times down to his own day, he hardly leaves a country or a civilization unrepresented in his gallery of illustrious portraits. 'The noble mansion', he held, 'is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings passed away, and so is the noble mind.' With the heroes of the past he loved to commune in that solitude that was to him best society. 'Among the chief pleasures of my life,' he tells us, 'and among the commonest of my occupations, was the bringing before me such heroes and heroines of antiquity, such poets and sages,

such of the prosperous and unfortunate, as most interested me by their courage, their eloquence, or their adventures. Engaging them in the conversations best suited to their characters, I knew perfectly their manners, their steps, their voices, and often did I moisten with my tears the models I had been forming of the less happy.' Thus his imagination was able to call them from the shades, and see them in their habit as they lived; to him, as to Wordsworth, there was

One great society alone on earth,  
The noble living and the noble dead.

History was to Landor a succession of vivid personalities, whose actions and whose thoughts revealed not only themselves, but the characteristics of the time which produced them. To know them was to know their age. In his presentation of them he was quite careless of historical accuracy, of date, place, or situation. He is full of anachronisms and discrepancies in literal fact. It was not the letter but the spirit as he conceived it that he wished to reproduce, and he felt quite free to take any liberties with historical fact which tended to bring out the essential qualities of his *dramatis personae*. For he was artist primarily, not historian.

Lessing has pointed out that 'the artist who aims at presenting one moment and one aspect of it, as does the sculptor or the painter, cannot be too careful that the moment and aspect chosen shall be in the highest degree pregnant in its meaning—that is, shall yield the utmost range to the activities of the imagination'. Some might conceive that the moment to be chosen would be the climax. 'But', says Lessing, 'in the whole evolution of the passion there is no one stage which has less of this advantage than its highest. Beyond it there is nothing, and to present the last extremity to the eye is in effect to put fetters on the imagination, and by denying it all possibility of rising above the sensible impression presented by the artist, to

throw its activities forcibly on the weaker images that lie below that impression.'

In the *Imaginary Conversations*, scenes as it were chosen from unwritten dramas, Landor's artistic instinct guides him to follow this principle. The moment that he delights in depicting is that one preceding the climax of the action, when some great resolution has been taken, but has yet to be fulfilled, as in the *Leofric and Godiva*, or when, as with Catharine of Russia, some great action long planned has at last been executed, and now that the climax is over, the character, as it were, recoils upon itself, and is revealed in all its complexity. He is at his greatest when some heroic soul is faced with death, and, freed at last from the trivialities that tended to obscure its true proportions, it stands out in clear outline, the light of eternity behind it. Landor does not present the death, but what might be called the emotional pose that precedes it. But in every case what he exhibits is some pause in the action, a moment when nothing is done, but much has to be endured. And in this moment of tragic suspense we feel, as it were by contrast, the passionate storm of life from which for an instant the actors have emerged. The action is all about us, through our own lively sense of the immediate past or the immediate future; it is present with us in the cries of battle which die away into the distance as we listen to the last words of Marcellus to Hannibal, in the forebodings of Godiva when the people crowd about her as she enters the city on the eve of her sacrifice—'I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow.' But the scene before us has the impressive stillness of arrested movement, giving opportunity for that revelation of spirit which in the tumult of action would escape observation. It is the supreme function of Landor's art, like that of painting or of sculpture, to give

To one brief moment caught from fleeting time  
The appropriate calm of blest Eternity.

The attainment of this effect depends no more upon the careful choice of the scene to be presented than upon the manner of its presentation. Landor never gives a full statement, he never exhausts his emotion; he leaves much to be overheard by sensitive ears, relying throughout upon his elaborate and studied use of literary irony.

In the style of his *Imaginary Conversations* there is no attempt at dramatic realism. All the dramatis personae speak Landorian English, which is far different both in rhythm and structure from the language of ordinary conversation. Landor justifies this, as was his wont, by analogy with the practice of the greatest dramatic writers. 'No man in pain', he says, 'ever used the best part of the language used by Sophocles in his delineation of Philoctetes. We admit it, and willingly; and are at least as much illuded by it as by anything else we hear or see upon the stage. Poets and statuaries and painters give us an adorned imitation of the object, so skilfully treated that we receive it for a correct one. This is the only illusion that they aim at; this is the perfection of their arts.' Now, in verse dialogue most people are prepared to accept this as a recognized artistic convention. They do not call *Hamlet* unnatural, because in real life Hamlet would not have spoken in blank verse. They judge of the language by its adequacy to express the ideas and emotions of the speaker, and recognize that through the beauty of the words they are attuned to sympathy with his emotion. The music of Landor's prose, as different from ordinary speech as that of Shakespeare's verse, is employed by him for the same purpose. It has its own beauty, beauty of a kind that creates the atmosphere in which his scenes have been conceived. It is careless of what is falsely called realism. It is in 'the grand style', which arises in Landor's prose, as in poetry, when a serious subject is treated 'with simplicity and severity'. For if

xxx ERNEST DE SELINCOURT ON LANDOR  
the object of art be to give immortality to great human passion, if it is its function to make

Sorrow more beautiful than beauty's self,  
it can best be achieved by some kind of idealization, and in a form which lowers that element that is painful and distressing in order to emphasize the hidden emotion of which the physical is often an imperfect manifestation. Few persons are beautiful when they weep, none when they cry, however noble the emotion that prompts their tears; and a realism that attempts to represent their emotion by drawing the actual physical expression is doomed to irretrievable failure. Art can depict satisfactorily by realistic methods the face of the child that cries for chocolate, only by idealization can it depict the face of the child that has lost its mother. The truth that art aims at is not in the external ugliness of the face in pain, whether physical or mental, but in the essential beauty or greatness of the emotion that sways it, and the imaginative sympathy with that emotion which it is able to arouse in us; and it is to awaken this and make us share it that the artist strives.

In that emotional prose which never overreaches itself, yet has a beauty of melody and rhythm comparable to great poetry, Landor is one of our supreme masters. Prose, he said, may be infinitely varied in modulation, it is an extension of metres, an amplification of harmonies, of which even the best and most varied of poetry admits but few; certainly his own prose has a more varied and a subtler cadence than his verse. But this does not imply either that he indulged in extraneous ornament, or that he neglected the intellectual in seeking for musical effect. The first duty of a writer, he tells us, is to be clear and concise. Obscurity is the worst fault in writing—worse to him than a flaw in the grammar, 'for we may discover a truth through such a defect which we cannot through an obscurity'. And when he is obscure himself, it is because of transitions too abrupt,

through overconciseness—never through a lack of clearness in his own mind. Next to lucidity, he delighted in fullness of sound and sense. It has often been thought that his vocabulary is too much Latinized, but though he loved Latin words for their sonority he used none that had not been fully Anglicized. In diction he is always conservative, and speaks his word against slang or slovenly attempts at picturesqueness of phrase. His English is that of a scholar, but it is never pedantic, it remains essentially English in idiom and in lucidity. And the harmony of cadence that he gives it is not far-sought at the expense of the logical or intellectual elements in the style. It is the blending of proportion and force. 'Natural sequences and right subordination of thoughts and that just proportion of numbers in the sentences which follow a strong conception, are the constituents of a true harmony.' And again, 'Whatever is rightly said, sounds rightly.' His desire for a fullness of sense as well as sound makes him an intensely pictorial and imaginative writer. He often speaks in metaphor. But metaphor with him is not ornament, it is illumination. It arises inevitably from his artistic conception of his subject. 'Never look abroad for ornament' is his advice. 'Apollo, either as the god of day or the slayer of the Python, had nothing to obscure his clearness or impede his strength.' Many writers use simile and metaphor either because they do not see clearly or because they see double, because they cannot express their meaning in plain language and strive to hide their confusion of thought in a heap of glowing words. Landor is poetic in style when he sees a thing imaginatively, when his appeal is to the emotions as well as to the intellect.

## SIR WALTER RALEIGH

*From On Writing and Writers (1926)*

LANDOR could not throw himself wholly or for long into the interests, passions, and minds of others. His *Imaginary Conversations* are not in the least dramatic. How many people have been excited by the names, and disappointed by the talk! It ends by being like a bad dream; we are always back in Landor's library, and someone is always *prosing*.

Yet, in prose or verse, he is a Master, and I think may be called a great Teacher. It is a special talent in some. How it would have pleased Landor to have a little circle and be called 'The Master'! How his affectionate nature would have blossomed! His doctrine is the best you can get. A School of Literature exists to follow his teaching—so far as it attempts the real work. Simplicity, parsimony, accuracy, gravity: these make a wonderful prose.

Landor cared little for philosophy and much for history, which he saw as a great and stately pageant. He liked the great *shapes* of historical events.

I love Landor even when he is as haughty and stuck-up as a child, and I love his short poems best of all his works. The *Heroic Idylls*, the *Hellenics*, are written in a noble style, but they are Culture poems, they breathe of the study. It is in extract that the longer poems have lived. 'I must read again Landor's *Julian*', Lamb wrote in 1815, 'I have not read it for some time. I think he must have failed in Roderick, for I remember nothing of him, nor of any distinct character as a character—only fine-sounding passages.' It is quite odd how Landor's people slip out of the mind. Yet some of their speeches are long remembered. The short gem-like passages might be made the test of a lecture on style. They are single (trivial) occasions celebrated in

lapidary verse. His loveliest things are written when he forgets himself:—

From you, Ianthe, little troubles pass,  
Like little ripples down a sunny river;  
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,  
Cut down, and up again as soon as ever.

No one could have written that unless he had felt tenderness and sympathy for health and youth and all young unthinking creatures.

Landor will not raise his voice. If he feels strongly, he is careful to choose words—I was going to say, no stronger than his feelings, but the truth is, a good deal weaker, or at least quieter, than his feelings. He never works up to a point, in verse or prose. He makes his point (tells the truth nakedly and severely), and then restores quiet by suggesting more peaceful considerations. This is so fixed a habit of his, that it is a mark of his style in verse or prose, his ‘dying fall’. He is so jealous of losing the level of sanity and quiet that he sometimes overreaches himself on the other side, and depreciates the importance of human emotion. Especially when he speaks of his own death, he uses a kind of inverted rhetoric: it is like suicide, a kind of egotism. See his lines ‘Proud word you never spoke’, ‘Fate, I have askt few things of thee’. Certainly he studied to be quiet. Yet, in this matter of his death, he is thinking more of his own dignity and self-abnegation and peace, than of the grief of his friends. These poems have the stately good manners of pride; they are not poems of passion, not for a moment self-forgetful, yet their charm (to me at least) is irresistible. They culminate in a four-lined poem as beautiful as his best:—

Death stands above me, whispering low  
I know not what into my ear:  
Of his strange language all I know  
Is, there is not a word of fear.



The same dying fall is used in 'The Death of Artemidora' in the *Hellenics*, and very beautifully in the prose account of the death of Acciaïoli given by Boccaccio in the *Pentameron*. If you come to taste writing like that, it makes coarse effects vulgar. There is a ceremonial gravity about it. Landor has an unerring feeling for impressions that the marble will take. He seems almost incapable of being deceived by pleasure or passion or anything but pride.

Landor's greatest prose passages might be collected in an anthology—'The Four Last Things'. There is nothing new in what he has to say, and nothing subtle; his mind is not swift or alert. But give him a grave theme where there is nothing new to tell, and he surpasses himself.

There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave; there are no voices, O Rhodope, that are not soon mute, however tuneful; there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.

Here he verges on poetry, and allows himself, no doubt wittingly, to drop into blank verse at the end. But how beautifully the sentence rolls and rises and subsides!

## OLIVER ELTON

From *The English Muse* (1933)

NO English poet, not even Milton, really *reproduces* the antique; if he tries, the result is a *pastiche*. He can appropriate something of its form and temper to express his own vision and his own sentiment; and this is the achievement of Walter Savage Landor, in his *Hellenics*, epigrams, and lyrics. His peculiar cleanness and distinctness of outline are learned in this school. He aims at a Greek severity, or a Greek delicacy; giving himself, as he says, 'the toil of smoothing under hardened hand, with Attic emery and oil'. But his debts to Greek cannot be disentangled from

his debts to Latin, which he used as a second mother-tongue; and we must fall back on Swinburne's epitaph:

And through the trumpet of a child of Rome  
Rang the pure music of the flutes of Greece.

Landor's own voice, a proud and resonant voice, is heard everywhere behind that of Agamemnon, or Silenus, or the numberless personages of his prose *Imaginary Conversations*. Idylls in verse like the beautiful *Hamadryad* and its sequel *Acon and Rhodope*, whatever they may owe to the Sicilian poets, are essentially Landorian, as well as modern and 'romantic', and a product of the age of Keats or Tennyson.

These *Hellenics* were first collected in 1846 and 1847; many had been written long before, and many originally in Latin. They are tales or scenes of middle length drawn from old mythology or tragic story; and not, like Tennyson's *Tiresias* or Browning's *Artemis Prologizes*, dramatic monologues. The *Last of Ulysses*, *Cupid and Pan*, the *Madness of Orestes*, are typical titles. None are more perfectly executed than the *Hamadryad*, *Enallos and Cymodamia*, and the short *Death of Artemidora*. These are also the best known. . . . Landor's lyrics and epigrams range over many years. Those addressed to 'Ianthé', Sophia Jane Swift, afterwards Mme. de Molandé, are both early and late. The lines 'Years, many parti-coloured years' are no less concise and final than those 'On the smooth brow and clustering hair'. The verses written in old age have a majestic quality of their own. 'I strove with none' is the most famous; like many others, it proclaims the writer's apartness of temper. 'I hate the crowd', he announces; it is the attitude of another classicist, Ben Jonson, and in Landor is no less genuine, though not without the same element of pose and arrogance. His praises of his friends, of the elect, multiply in his later years. At various times he does honour to Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, Hood, and Robert Browning; always with peculiar grace and felicity. One of his most deeply felt and

stately elegies is addressed *To the Sister of Elia*. The span of his literary production is lengthy indeed. *Gebir*, a kind of romantic epic, appeared in the year of *Lyrical Ballads*; *Last Fruit Off an Old Tree*—and it was not the last—in 1853. In his tragedies, of which the chief are *Count Julian* (1812) and *Andrea of Hungary* (1839) there is no lack of striking situation, or of dignified verse, or of grasp of character; but alas, in the result they are heavy, and Landor's talent was not dramatic. Probably the eight lines of *Rose Aylmer* outlast, even in the memory of students, the thousands that swell out his dramas.

Selections from  
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

## TAMAR'S WRESTLING

*Gebir* (1798, 1803)

'Twas evening, though not sun-set, and spring-tide  
Level with these green meadows, seem'd still higher;  
'Twas pleasant: and I loosen'd from my neck  
The pipe you gave me, and began to play.  
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art! 5  
It always brings us enemies or love!  
Well, I was playing—when above the waves  
Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend;  
I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe  
Awkwardly held before my lips half-clos'd. 10  
Gebir! it was a nymph! a nymph divine!  
I cannot wait describing how she came,  
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd  
The sailor: of what happened, there remains  
Enough to say, and too much to forget. 15  
The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank  
Before I was aware; for, with surprize  
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.  
Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,  
I heard a rustling; and where that arose 20  
My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.  
Her feet resembled those long shells explored  
By him who to befriend his steeds' dim sight  
Would blow the pungent powder in their eye.—  
Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her eyes 25  
Resembled—what could they resemble—what  
Ever resemble those! E'en her attire  
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art:  
Her mantle shew'd the yellow samphire-pod,  
Her girdle, the dove-color'd wave serene. 30  
'Shepherd,' said she, 'and will you wrestle now,  
And with the sailor's hardier race engage?'

I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived  
 How to keep up contention ;—could I fail  
 By pressing not too strongly, still to press. 35  
 ‘Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,  
 Or whether of the hardier race you boast,  
 I am not daunted, no: I will engage.’  
 ‘But first,’ said she, ‘what wager will you lay?’  
 ‘A sheep,’ I answered, ‘add whate’er you will.’ 40  
 ‘I cannot,’ she replied, ‘make that return:  
 Our hidéd vessels, in their pitchy round,  
 Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.  
 But I have sinuous shells, of pearly hue  
 Within, and they that lustre have imbibed 45  
 In the sun’s palace porch ; where, when unyoked,  
 His chariot wheel stands midway in the wave.  
 Shake one, and it awakens ; then apply  
 Its polished lips to your attentive ear,  
 And it remembers its august abodes, 50  
 And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.  
 And I have others given me by the nymphs,  
 Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have.—  
 But we, by Neptune, for no pipe contend ;  
 This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.’ 55  
 Now came she forward, eager to engage ;  
 But, first her dress, her bosom then, survey’d,  
 And heav’d it, doubting if she could deceive.  
 Her bosom seem’d, inclos’d in haze like heav’n,  
 To baffle touch ; and rose forth undefined. 60  
 Above her knees she drew the robe succinct,  
 Above her breast, and just below her arms:  
 ‘This will preserve my breath, when tightly bound,  
 If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.’  
 Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spoke, 65  
 And, rushing at me, closed. I thrill’d throughout  
 And seem’d to lessen and shrink up with cold.

Again, with violent impulse gushed my blood ;  
 And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,  
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein, 70  
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.  
 Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms,  
 I clung around her neck ; the vest beneath  
 Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined :  
 Often mine, springing with eluded force, 75  
 Started aside, and trembled, till replaced.  
 And when I most succeeded, as I thought,  
 My bosom and my throat felt so compest  
 That life was almost quivering on my lips,  
 Yet nothing was there painful ! these are signs 80  
 Of secret arts, and not of human might,  
 What arts I cannot tell : I only know  
 My eyes grew dizzy, and my strength decay'd,  
 I was indeed o'ercome !—with what regret,  
 And more, with what confusion, when I reached 85  
 The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,  
 ' This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.'  
 She smil'd, and more of pleasure than disdain  
 Was in her dimpled chin, and liberal lip,  
 And eyes that languished, lengthening,—just like love. 90  
 She went away : I, on the wicker gate  
 Lean'd, and could follow with my eyes alone.  
 The sheep she carried easy as a cloak.  
 But when I heard its bleating, as I did,  
 And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet 95  
 Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip,  
 (One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,)  
 Then, all my passions mingling fell in tears !  
 Restless then ran I to the highest ground  
 To watch her ; she was gone ; gone down the tide ; 100  
 And the long moon-beam on the hard wet sand  
 Lay like a jasper column half uprear'd.

## ENALLOS AND CYMODAMEIA

*Works* (1846)

A VISION came o'er three young men at once,  
 A vision of Apollo: each had heard  
 The same command; each followed it; all three  
 Assembled on one day before the God  
 In Lycia, where he gave his oracle. 5  
 Bright shone the morning; and the birds that build  
 Their nests beneath the column-heads of fanes  
 And eaves of humbler habitations, dropt  
 From under them and wheeled athwart the sky,  
 When, silently and reverently, the youths 10  
 Marcht side by side up the long steps that led  
 Toward the awful God who dwelt within.  
 Of those three youths fame hath held fast the name  
 Of one alone; nor would that name survive  
 Unless Love had sustain'd it, and blown off 15  
 With his impatient breath the mists of time.  
 'Ye come,' the God said mildly, 'of one will  
 To people what is desert in the isle  
 Of Lemnos. But strong men possess its shores;  
 Nor shall you execute the brave emprize 20  
 Unless, on the third day from going forth,  
 To him who rules the waters ye devote  
 A virgin, cast into the sea alive.'  
 They heard, and lookt in one another's face,  
 And then bent piously before the shrine 25  
 With prayer and praises and thanksgiving hymn,  
 And, after a short silence, went away,  
 Taking each other's hand and swearing truth,  
 Then to the ship in which they came, return'd.  
 Two of the youths were joyous, one was sad; 30  
 Sad was Enallos; yet those two by none  
 Were loved; Enallos had already won



Cymodameia, and the torch was near.  
 By night, by day, in company, alone,  
 The image of the maiden fill'd his breast 35  
 To the heart's brim. Ah! therefore did that heart  
 So sink within him.

They have sail'd; they reach  
 Their home again. Sires, matrons, maidens, throng  
 The plashing port, to watch the gather'd sail,  
 And who springs first and farthest upon shore. 40  
 Enallos came the latest from the deck.  
 Swift ran the rumour what the God had said,  
 And fearful were the maidens, who before  
 Had urged the sailing of the youths they loved,  
 That they might give their hands, and have their homes,  
 And nurse their children; and more thoughts perhaps 46  
 Led up to these, and even ran before.  
 But they persuaded easily their wooers  
 To sail without them, and return again  
 When they had seiz'd the virgin on the way. 50  
 Cymodameia dreamt three nights, the three  
 Before their fresh departure, that her own  
 Enallos had been cast into the deep,  
 And she had saved him. She alone embarkt  
 Of all the maidens, and unseen by all, 55  
 And hid herself before the break of day  
 Among the cloaks and fruits piled high aboard.  
 But when the noon was come, and the repast  
 Was call'd for, there they found her. Not quite stern,  
 But more than sad, Enallos lookt upon her. 60  
 Forebodings shook him: hopes rais'd *her*, and love  
 Warm'd the clear cheek while she wiped off the spray.  
 Kindly were all to her and dutiful;  
 And she slept soundly mid the leaves of figs  
 And vines, and far as far could be apart. 65  
 Now the third morn had risen, and the day

Was dark, and gusts of wind and hail and fogs  
 Perplexed them: land they saw not yet, nor knew  
 Where land was lying. Sudden lightnings blaz'd,  
 Thunder-claps rattled round them. The pale crew 70  
 Howled for the victim. 'Seize her, or we sink.'

O maid of Pindus! I would linger here  
 To lave my eyelids at the nearest rill,  
 For thou hast made me weep, as oft thou hast,  
 Where thou and I, apart from living men, 75  
 And two or three crags higher, sate and sang.  
 Ah! must I, seeing ill my way, proceed?  
 And thy voice too, Cymodameia! thine  
 Comes back upon me, helpless as thyself  
 In this extremity. Sad words! sad words! 80  
 'O save me! save! Let me not die so young!  
 Loving you so! Let me not cease to see you!'  
 Thou claspedest the youth who would have died  
 To have done less than save thee. Thus he prayed.  
 'O God! who givest light to all the world, 85  
 Take not from me what makes that light most blessed!  
 Grant me, if 'tis forbidden me to save  
 This hapless helpless sea-devoted maid,  
 To share with her (and bring no curses up  
 From outraged Neptune) her appointed fate!' 90  
 They wrung her from his knee; they hurl'd her down  
 (Clinging in vain at the hard slippery pitch)  
 Into the whitening wave. But her long hair  
 Scarcely had risen up again, before  
 Another plunge was heard, another form 95  
 Clove the straight line of bubbling foam, direct  
 As ringdove after ringdove. Groans from all  
 Burst, for the roaring sea ingulpht them both.  
 Onward the vessel flew; the skies again  
 Shone bright, and thunder roll'd along, not wroth, 100  
 But gently murmuring to the white-wing'd sails.

Lemnos at close of evening was in sight.  
 The shore was won; the fields markt out; and roofs  
 Collected the dun wings that seek house-fare;  
 And presently the ruddy-bosom'd guest 105  
 Of winter knew the doors: then infant cries  
 Were heard within; and lastly, tottering steps  
 Pattered along the image-stationed hall.  
 Ay, three full years had come and gone again,  
 And often, when the flame on windy nights 110  
 Suddenly flicker'd from the mountain-ash  
 Piled high, men pusht almost from under them  
 The bench on which they talkt about the dead.  
 Meanwhile beneficent Apollo saw  
 With his bright eyes into the sea's calm depth, 115  
 And there he saw Enallos, there he saw  
 Cymodameia. Gravely-gladsome light  
 Environed them with its eternal green:  
 And many nymphs sate round: one blew aloud  
 The spiral shell; one drew bright chords across 120  
 Shell more expansive; tenderly a third  
 With cowering lip hung o'er the flute, and stopt  
 At will its dulcet sob, or waked to joy;  
 A fourth took up the lyre and pincht the strings,  
 Invisible by trembling: many rais'd 125  
 Clear voices. Thus they spent their happy hours.  
 I know them all; but all with eyes downcast,  
 Conscious of loving, have entreated me  
 I would not utter now their names above.  
 Behold, among these natives of the sea 130  
 There stands but one young man: how fair! how fond!  
 Ah! were he fond to *them!* It may not be!  
 Yet did they tend him morn and eve; by night  
 They also watcht his slumbers: then they heard  
 His sighs, nor his alone; for there were two 135  
 To whom the watch was hateful. In despair

Upward he rais'd his arms, and thus he prayed,  
 'O Phoebus! on the higher world alone  
 Showerest thou all thy blessings? Great indeed  
 Hath been thy favour to me, great to her; 140  
 But she pines inly, and calls beautiful  
 More than herself the Nymphs she sees around,  
 And asks me 'Are they not more beautiful?'  
 Be all more beautiful, be all more blest,  
 But not with me! Release her from the sight; 145  
 Restore her to a happier home, and dry  
 With thy pure beams, above, her bitter tears!'

She saw him in the action of his prayer,  
 Troubled, and ran to soothe him. From the ground,  
 Ere she had claspt his neck, her feet were borne. 150  
 He caught her robe; and its white radiance rose  
 Rapidly, all day long, through the green sea.  
 Enallos loost not from that robe his grasp,  
 But spann'd one ancle too. The swift ascent  
 Had stunn'd them into slumber, sweet, serene, 155  
 Invigorating her, nor letting loose  
 The lover's arm below; albeit at last  
 It closed those eyes intensely fixt thereon,  
 And still as fixt in dreaming. Both were cast  
 Upon an island till'd by peaceful men 160  
 And few (no port nor road accessible)  
 Fruitful and green as the abode they left,  
 And warm with summer, warm with love and song.  
 'Tis said that some, whom most Apollo loves,  
 Have seen that island, guided by his light; 165  
 And others have gone near it, but a fog  
 Rose up between them and the lofty rocks;  
 Yet they relate they saw it quite as well,  
 And shepherd-boys and credulous hinds believe.

## TO CORINTH

*Imaginary Conversations* (1824)

QUEEN of the double sea, beloved of him  
 Who shakes the world's foundations, thou hast seen  
 Glory in all her beauty, all her forms;  
 Seen her walk back with Theseus when he left  
 The bones of Sciron bleaching to the wind, 5  
 Above the ocean's roar and cormorant's flight,  
 So high that vastest billows from above  
 Shew but like herbage waving in the mead;  
 Seen generations throng thine Isthmian games,  
 And pass away . . . the beautiful, the brave, 10  
 And them who sang their praises.

But, O Queen,  
 Audible still (and far beyond thy cliffs)  
 As when they first were uttered, are those words  
 Divine which praised the valiant and the just,  
 And tears have often stopt, upon that ridge 15  
 So perilous, him who brought before his eye  
 The Colchian babes.

'Stay! spare him! save the last!  
 Medea! . . . is that blood? again! it drops  
 From my imploring hand upon my feet . . .  
 I will invoke the Eumenides no more, 20  
 I will forgive thee, bless thee, bend to thee  
 In all thy wishes . . . do but thou, Medea,  
 Tell me, one lives.'

'And shall I too deceive?'  
 Cries from the fiery car an angry voice;  
 And swifter than two falling stars descend 25  
 Two breathless bodies: warm, soft, motionless,  
 As flowers in stillest noon before the sun,  
 They lie three paces from him: such they lie  
 As when he left them sleeping side by side,

## II

A mother's arm round each, a mother's cheeks 30  
 Between them, flushed with happiness and love.  
 He was more changed than they were . . . doomed to shew  
 Thee and the stranger, how defaced and scarred  
 Grief hunts us down the precipice of years,  
 And whom the faithless prey upon the last. 35  
 To give the inertest masses of our Earth  
 Her loveliest forms was thine, to fix the Gods  
 Within thy walls, and hang their tripods round  
 With fruits and foliage knowing not decay.  
 A nobler work remains: thy citadel 40  
 Invites all Greece: o'er lands and floods remote  
 Many are the hearts that still beat high for thee:  
 Confide then in thy strength, and unappalled  
 Look down upon the plain, while yokemate kings  
 Run bellowing, where their herdsmen goad them on: 45  
 Instinct is sharp in them and terror true,  
 They smell the floor whereon their necks must lie.

## CORINNA TO TANAGRA

*Pericles and Aspasia (1836)*

### I

TANAGRA! think not I forget  
 Thy beautifully-storied streets:  
 Be sure my memory bathes yet  
 In clear Thermodon, and yet greets  
 The blythe and liberal shepherd-boy, 5  
 Whose sunny bosom swells with joy  
 When we accept his matted rushes  
 Upheav'd with sylvan fruit; away he bounds, and blushes.

### 2

I promise to bring back with me  
 What thou with transport wilt receive, 10

The only proper gift for thee,  
 Of which no mortal shall bereave  
 In later times thy mouldering walls,  
 Until the last old turret falls ;  
 A crown, a crown from Athens won, 15  
 A crown no God can wear, beside Latona's son.

## 3

There may be cities who refuse  
 To their own child the honours due,  
 And look ungently on the Muse ;  
 But ever shall those cities rue 20  
 The dry, unyielding niggard breast,  
 Offering no nourishment, no rest,  
 To that young head which soon shall rise  
 Disdainfully, in might and glory, to the skies.

## 4

Sweetly where cavern'd Dirce flows 25  
 Do white-arm'd maidens chaunt my lay,  
 Flapping the while with laurel-rose  
 The honey-gathering tribes away ;  
 And sweetly, sweetly, Attick tongues  
 Lisp your Corinna's early songs ; 30  
 To her with feet more graceful come  
 The verses that have dwelt in kindred breasts at home.

## 5

O let thy children lean aslant  
 Against the tender mother's knee,  
 And gaze into her face, and want 35  
 To know what magic there can be  
 In words that urge some eyes to dance,  
 While others as in holy trance  
 Look up to heaven ; be such my praise !  
 Why linger ? I must haste, or lose the Delphick bays. 40

# VERSES OF MIMNERMUS

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

I WISH not Thasos rich in mines,  
 Nor Naxos girt around with vines,  
 Nor Crete nor Samos, the abodes  
 Of those who govern men and Gods,  
 Nor wider Lydia, where the sound 5  
 Of tymbrels shakes the thymy ground,  
 And with white feet and with hoofs cloven  
 The dedal dance is spun and woven:  
 Meanwhile each prying younger thing  
 Is sent for water to the spring, 10  
 Under where red Priapus rears  
 His club amid the junipers;  
 In this whole world enough for me  
 Is any spot the Gods decree;  
 Albeit the pious and the wise 15  
 Would tarry where, like mulberries,  
 In the first hour of ripeness fall  
 The tender creatures, one and all.  
 To take what falls with even mind  
 Jove wills, and we must be resign'd. 20

# THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA

*Pericles and Aspasia* (Works, 1846)

'ARTEMIDORA! Gods invisible,  
 While thou art lying faint along the couch,  
 Have tied the sandal to thy veined feet,  
 And stand beside thee, ready to convey  
 Thy weary steps where other rivers flow. 5  
 Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness  
 Away, and voices like thine own come nigh,  
 Soliciting, nor vainly, thy embrace.'



Artemidora sigh'd, and would have press'd  
 The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak. 10  
 Fate's shears were over her dark hair unseen  
 While thus Elpenor spake: he look'd into  
 Eyes that had given light and life erewhile  
 To those above them, those now dim with tears  
 And watchfulness. Again he spake of joy 15  
 Eternal. At that word, that sad word, *joy*,  
 Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more,  
 Her head fell back: one sob, one loud deep sob  
 Swell'd through the darkened chamber; 'twas not hers:  
 With her that old boat incorruptible, 20  
 Unwearied, undiverted in its course,  
 Had plash'd the water up the farther strand.

## IPHIGENEIA

*Works (1846)*

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom  
 At Aulis, and when all beside the king  
 Had gone away, took his right-hand, and said,  
 'O father! I am young and very happy.  
 I do not think the pious Calchas heard 5  
 Distinctly what the Goddess spake. Old age  
 Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who knew  
 My voice so well, sometimes misunderstood,  
 While I was resting on her knee both arms  
 And hitting it to make her mind my words, 10  
 And looking in her face, and she in mine,  
 Might not he also hear one word amiss,  
 Spoken from so far off, even from Olympus?'  
 The father placed his cheek upon her head,  
 And tears dropt down it, but the king of men 15  
 Replied not. Then the maiden spake once more.  
 'O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st thou not

Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,  
 Listen'd to fondly, and awaken'd me  
 To hear my voice amid the voice of birds, 20  
 When it was inarticulate as theirs,  
 And the down deadened it within the nest?'  
 He moved her gently from him, silent still,  
 And this, and this alone, brought tears from her,  
 Altho' she saw fate nearer: then with sighs, 25  
 'I thought to have laid down my hair before  
 Benignant Artemis, and not have dimm'd  
 Her polisht altar with my virgin blood;  
 I thought to have selected the white flowers  
 To please the Nymphs, and to have askt of each 30  
 By name, and with no sorrowful regret,  
 Whether, since both my parents will'd the change,  
 I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipt brow;  
 And (after these who mind us girls the most)  
 Adore our own Athena, that she would 35  
 Regard me mildly with her azure eyes.  
 But father! to see you no more, and see  
 Your love, O father! go ere I am gone!'  
 Gently he moved her off, and drew her back,  
 Bending his lofty head far over her's, 40  
 And the dark depths of nature heaved and burst.  
 He turn'd away; not far, but silent still.  
 She now first shudder'd; for in him, so nigh,  
 So long a silence seem'd the approach of death,  
 And like it. Once again she rais'd her voice. 45  
 'O father! if the ships are now detain'd,  
 And all your vows move not the Gods above,  
 When the knife strikes me there will be one prayer  
 The less to them: and purer can there be  
 Any, or more fervent than the daughter's prayer 50  
 For her dear father's safety and success?'  
 A groan that shook him shook not his resolve.

An aged man now enter'd, and without  
 One word, stept slowly on, and took the wrist  
 Of the pale maiden. She lookt up, and saw 55  
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold eyes.  
 Then turn'd she where her parent stood, and cried  
 'O father! grieve no more: the ships can sail.'

## ON TERNISSA'S DEATH

*Works* (1846)

TERNISSA! you are fled!  
 I say not to the dead,  
 But to the happy ones who rest below:  
 For, surely, surely, where  
 Your voice and graces are, 5  
 Nothing of death can any feel or know.  
 Girls who delight to dwell  
 Where grows most asphodel,  
 Gather to their calm breasts each word you speak:  
 The mild Persephone 10  
 Places you on her knee,  
 And your cool palm smoothes down stern Pluto's cheek.

## A FRIEND TO THEOCRITOS IN EGYPT

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

Dost thou not often gasp with longdrawn sighs,  
 Theocritos, recalling Sicily?  
 Glorious is Nile, but rather give me back  
 Our little rills, which fain would run away  
 And hide themselves from persecuting suns 5  
 In summer, under oleander boughs,  
 And catch its roses as they flaunt above.  
 Here are no birds that sing, no sweeter flower

Than tiny fragile weak-eyed resida,  
 Which faints upon the bosom it would cool. 10  
 Altho' the royal lotos sits aloof  
 On his rich carpet, spred from wave to wave,  
 I throw myself more gladly where the pine  
 Protects me, loftier than the palace-roof,  
 Or where the linden and acacia meet 15  
 Across my path, in fragrance to contend.  
 Bring back the hour, Theocritos, when we  
 Shall sit together on a thymy knoll,  
 With few about us, and with none too nigh,  
 And when the song of shepherds and their glee 20  
 We may repeat, perchance and gaily mock,  
 Until one bolder than the rest springs up  
 And slaps us on the shoulder for our pains.  
 Take thou meanwhile these two papyrus-leaves,  
 Recording, one the loves and one the woes 25  
 Of Pan and Pity's, heretofore unsung.  
 Aside our rivers and within our groves  
 The pastoral pipe hath dropt its mellow lay,  
 And shepherds in their contests only try  
 Who best can puzzle.  
 Come, Theocritos, 30  
 Come, let us lend a shoulder to the wheel  
 And help to lift it from this depth of sand.

## HELLAS

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

WHY do I praise a peach  
 Not on my wall, no, nor within my reach?  
 Because I see the bloom  
 And scent the fragrance many steps from home.  
 Permit me stil to praise 5  
 The higher Genius of departed days.

Some are there yet who, nurst  
 In the same clime, are vigorous as the first,  
 And never waste their hours  
 (Ardent for action) among meadow flowers. 10  
 Greece with calm eyes I see,  
 Her pure white marbles have not blinded me,  
 But breathe on me the love  
 Of earthly things as bright as things above:  
 There is (where is there not?) 15  
 In her fair regions many a desert spot;  
 Neither is Dircè clear,  
 Nor is Ilissus full throughout the year.

## REGENERATION

*Imaginary Conversations (1824)*

WE are what suns and winds and waters make us;  
 The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills  
 Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.  
 But where the land is dim from tyranny,  
 There tiny pleasures occupy the place 5  
 Of glories and of duties; as the feet  
 Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down  
 Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.  
 Then Justice, called the eternal one above,  
 Is more inconstant than the buoyant form 10  
 That bursts into existence from the froth  
 Of ever-varying ocean: what is best  
 Then becomes worst; what loveliest, most deformed.  
 The heart is hardest in the softest climes,  
 The passions flourish, the affections die. 15

## ON WAR

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

WAR is it, O grave heads! that ye  
 With stern and stately pomp decree?  
 Inviting all the Gods from far  
 To join you in the game of war!  
 Have ye then lived so many years 5  
 To find no purer joy than tears?  
 And seek ye now the highest good  
 In strife, in anguish, and in blood?  
 Your wisdom may be more than ours,  
 But you have spent your golden hours, 10  
 And have methinks but little right  
 To make the happier fret and fight.  
 Ah! when will come the calmer day  
 When these dark clouds shall pass away?  
 When (should two cities disagree) 15  
 The young, the beauteous, and the free,  
 Rushing with all their force, shall meet,  
 And struggle with embraces sweet,  
 Til they who may have suffer'd most  
 Give in, and own the battle lost. 20

## IRELAND

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

IRELAND never was contented . .  
 Say you so? you are demented.  
 Ireland was contented when  
 All could use the sword and pen,  
 And when Tara rose so high 5  
 That her turrets split the sky,  
 And about her courts were seen  
 Liveried Angels robed in green,  
 Wearing, by Saint Patrick's bounty,  
 Emeralds big as half a county. 10

# WALTER TYRREL AND WILLIAM RUFUS

*Pentalogia* (1837)

*Rufus.* Tyrrel, spur onward! we must not await  
The laggard lords: when they have heard the dogs  
I warrant they will follow fast enough,  
Each for his haunch. Thy roan is mettlesome ;  
How the rogue sidles up to me, and claims 5  
Acquaintance with young Yorkshire! not afraid  
Of wrinkling lip, nor ear laid down like grass  
By summer thunder-shower on Windsor mead.

*Tyrrel.* Behold, my liege! hither they troop amain,  
Over yon gap.

*Rufus.* Over my pales! the dolts 10  
Have broken down my pales!

*Tyrrel.* Please you, my liege,  
Unless they had, they must have ridden round  
Eleven miles.

*Rufus.* Why not have ridden round  
Eleven miles? or twenty, were there need.  
By our Lady! they shall be our carpenters 15  
And mend what they have marred. At any time  
I can make fifty lords; but who can make  
As many head of deer, if mine escape?  
And sure they will, unless they too are mad.  
Call me that bishop . . him with hunting-cap 20  
Surcharged with cross, and scarlet above knee.

*Tyrrel* (*galloping forward*). Ho! my lord bishop!

*Bishop.* Who calls me?

*Tyrrel.* Your slave.

*Bishop.* Well said, if toned as well and timed as well.  
Who art thou? citizen or hind? what wantest?

*Tyrrel.* My lord! your presence; but before the king; 25  
Where it may grow more placid at its leisure.

The morn is only streakt with red, my lord!  
 You beat her out and out: how prettily  
 You wear your stocking over head and ears!  
 Keep off the gorse and broom! they soon catch fire! 30

*Bishop.* The king shall hear of this: I recognise  
 Sir Walter Tyrrel.

*Tyrrel.* And Sir Walter Tyrrel  
 By the same token duly recognises  
 The Church's well-begotten son, well-fed,  
 Well-mounted, and all well, except well-spoken, 35  
 The spiritual lord of Winchester.

*Bishop.* Ay, by God's grace! pert losel!

*Tyrrel.* Prick along  
 Lord bishop! quicker! catch fresh air! we want it;  
 We have had foul enough till dinner-time.

*Bishop.* Varlet! I may chastise this insolence. 40

*Tyrrel.* I like those feathers: but there crows no cock  
 Without an answer. Though the noisiest throat  
 Sings from the bellfrey of snug Winchester,  
 Yet he from Westminster hath stouter spurs.

*Bishop.* God's blood! were I no bishop. . .

*Tyrrel.* Then thy own 45  
 Were cooler.

*Bishop.* Whip that hound aside! O Christ!  
 The beast has paw'd my housings! What a day  
 For dirt!

*Tyrrel.* The scent lies well; pity no more  
 The housings; look, my lord! here trots the king!

*Rufus.* Which of you broke my palings down?

*Bishop.* God knows, 50  
 Most gracious sir.

*Rufus.* No doubt he does; but you,  
 Bishop! could surely teach us what God knows.  
 Ride back and order some score handicrafts  
 To fix them in their places.



*Bishop.*

The command

Of our most gracious king shall be obeyed. 55

(*Riding off.*) Malisons on the atheist! Who can tell

Where are my squires and other men! confused

Among the servitors of temporal lords!

I must e'en turn again and hail that brute.

Sir Walter! good Sir Walter! one half-word! 60

[*Tyrrel rides toward him.*

Sir Walter! may I task your courtesy

To find me any of my followers!

*Tyrrel.* Willingly.

*Rufus.* Stay with me: I want thee, Tyrrel!

What does the bishop boggle at?

*Tyrrel.* At nothing.

He seeks his people, to retrieve the damage. 65

*Rufus.* Where are the lords?

*Tyrrel.* Gone past your Grace, bare-headed,  
And falling in the rear.

*Rufus.* Well, prick then on.

I care but little for the chase to-day,

Although the scent lies sweetly. To knock down

My paling is vexatious. We must see 70

Our great improvements in this forest; what

Of roads blockt up, of hamlets swept away,

Of lurking dens called cottages, and cells,

And hermitages. Tyrrel! thou didst right

And dutifully, to remove the house 75

Of thy forefathers. 'Twas an odd request,

To leave the dovecote, for the sake of those

Flea-bitten blind old pigeons. There it stands!

But, in God's name! what mean these hives? the bees

May sting my dogs.

*Tyrrel.* They hunt not in the summer. 80

*Rufus.* They may torment my fawns.

*Tyrrel.* Sir! not unless

Driven from their hives: they like the flowers much better.

*Rufus.* Flowers! and leave flowers too?

*Tyrrel.* Only some half-wild,  
In tangled knots; balm, clary, marjoram.

*Rufus.* What lies beyond this close briar hedge, that smells  
Through the thick dew upon it, pleasantly? 86

*Tyrrel.* A poor low cottage: the dry marl-pit shields it,  
And, frail and unsupported like itself,  
Peace-breathing honeysuckles comfort it  
In its misfortunes.

*Rufus.* I am fain to laugh 90  
At thy rank minstrelsy. A poor low cottage!  
Only a poor low cottage! where, I ween,  
A poor low maiden blesses Walter Tyrrel.

*Tyrrel.* It may be so.

*Rufus.* No; it may not be so.  
My orders were that all should be removed, 95  
And, out of special favour, special trust  
In thee, Sir Walter, I consigned the care  
Into thy hands, of razing thy own house  
And those about it; since thou hast another  
Fairer and newer, and more lands around. 100

*Tyrrel.* Hall, chapel, chamber, cellar, turret, grange,  
Are level with the grass.

*Rufus.* What negligence  
To leave the work then incomplete, when little  
Was there remaining! Strip that roof, and start  
Thy petty game from cover.

*Tyrrel.* O my liege! 105  
Command not this!

*Rufus.* Make me no confidant  
Of thy base loves.

*Tyrrel.* Nor you, my liege! nor any:  
None such hath Walter Tyrrel.

*Rufus.* Thou 'rt at bay;

Thou hast forgotten thy avowal, man!

*Tyrrel.* My father's house is (like my father) gone: 110  
But in that house, and from that father's heart  
Mine grew into his likeness, and held thence  
Its rich possessions . . God forgive my boast!  
He bade me help the needy, raise the low . .

*Rufus.* And stand against thy king!

*Tyrrel.* How many yokes 115  
Of oxen, from how many villages  
For miles around, brought I, at my own charge,  
To bear away the rafters and the beams  
That were above my cradle at my birth,  
And rang when I was christened, to the carouse 120  
Of that glad father and his loyal friends!

*Rufus.* He kept good cheer, they tell me.

*Tyrrel.* Yonder thatch  
Covers the worn-out woman at whose breast  
I hung, an infant.

*Rufus.* Ay! and none beside?

*Tyrrel.* Four sons have fallen in the wars.

*Rufus.* Brave dogs! 125

*Tyrrel.* She hath none left.

*Rufus.* No daughter?

*Tyrrel.* One.

*Rufus.* I thought it.

Unkennel her.

*Tyrrel.* Grace! pity! mercy on her!

*Rufus.* I will not have hot scents about my chase.

*Tyrrel.* A virtuous daughter of a virtuous mother  
Deserves not this, my liege!

*Rufus.* Am I to learn 130  
What any subject at my hand deserves?

*Tyrrel.* Happy, who dares to teach it and who can!

*Rufus.* And thou, forsooth!

*Tyrrel.* I have done my duty, sire!

*Rufus.* Not half: perform the rest, or bide my wrath.

*Tyrrel.* What, break athwart my knee the staff of age! 135

*Rufus.* Question me, villain!

*Tyrrel.* Villain I am none.

*Rufus.* Retort my words! By all the saints, thou diest,  
False traitor.

*Tyrrel.* Sire, no private wrong, no word  
Spoken in angriness, no threat against  
My life or honour, urge me . .

*Rufus.* Urge to what? 140  
Dismountest?

*Tyrrel.* On my knees, as best beseems,  
I ask . . not pardon, sire! but spare, oh spare  
The child devoted, the deserted mother!

*Rufus.* Take her; take both.

*Tyrrel.* She loves her home; her limbs  
Fail her; her husband sleeps in that churchyard; 145  
Her youngest child, born many years the last,  
Lies (not half-length) along the father's coffin.  
Such separate love grows stronger in the stem  
(I have heard say) than others close together,  
And that, where pass these funerals, all life's spring 150  
Vanishes from behind them, all the fruits  
Of riper age are shrivelled, every sheaf  
Husky; no gleaning left. She would die here,  
Where from her bed she looks on his, no more  
Able to rise, poor little soul! than he. 155

*Rufus.* Who would disturb them, child or father? where  
Is the churchyard thou speakest of?

*Tyrrel.* Among  
Yon nettles: we have levelled all the graves.

*Rufus.* Right: or our horses might have stumbled on them.

*Tyrrel.* Your grace oft spares the guilty; spare the  
innocent! 160

*Rufus.* Up from the dew! thy voice is hoarse already.

*Tyrrel.* Yet God hath heard it. It entreats again,  
Once more, once only; spare this wretched house.

*Rufus.* No, nor thee neither.

*Tyrrel.* Speed me, God! and judge  
O thou! between the oppressor and opprest! 165

[*He pierces Rufus with an arrow.*]

## WISDOM OF LIFE AND DEATH

### i. *On Seeing a Hair of Lucretia Borgia*

*New Monthly Magazine* (1825)

BORGIA, thou once wert almost too august,  
And high for adoration;—now thou'rt dust!  
All that remains of thee these plaits infold—  
Calm hair, meand'ring with pellucid gold!

### ii. *Dirce*

*Gebir and Other Poems* (1831)

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,  
With Dirce in one boat conveyed!  
Or Charon, seeing, may forget  
That he is old and she a shade.

### iii. *A Moral*

1835. J. Ablett, *Literary Hours* (1837)

PLEASURES! away; they please no more.  
Friends! are they what they were before?  
Loves! they are very idle things,  
The best about them are their wings.  
The dance! 'tis what the bear can do; 5  
Musick! I hate your musick too.

Whene'er these witnesses that Time  
Hath snatcht the chaplet from our prime,  
Are call'd by Nature, as we go  
With eye more wary, step more slow, 10

And will be heard and noted down,  
 However we may fret or frown,  
 Shall we desire to leave the scene  
 Where all our former joys have been?

No, 'twere ungrateful and unwise . . . 15  
 But when die down our charities  
 For human weal and human woes,  
 Then is the time our eyes should close.

## iv-ix

*Works* (1846)

## iv

WHY, why repine, my pensive friend,  
 At pleasures slipt away?  
 Some the stern Fates will never lend,  
 And all refuse to stay.

I see the rainbow in the sky, 5  
 The dew upon the grass,  
 I see them, and I ask not why  
 They glimmer or they pass.

With folded arms I linger not  
 To call them back; 'twere vain; 10  
 In this, or in some other spot,  
 I know they'll shine again.

v. *Plays*

ALAS, how soon the hours are over,  
 Counted us out to play the lover!  
 And how much narrower is the stage,  
 Allotted us to play the sage!  
 But when we play the fool, how wide 5  
 The theatre expands; beside,  
 How long the audience sits before us!  
 How many prompters! what a chorus!

VARIOUS the roads of life ; in one  
 All terminate, one lonely way.  
 We go ; and ' Is he gone ? '  
 Is all our best friends say.

EACH year bears something from us as it flies,  
 We only blow it farther with our sighs.

SHE was so beautiful, had God but died  
 For her, and none beside,  
 Reeling with holy joy from east to west  
 Earth would have sunk down blest ;  
 And, burning with bright zeal, the buoyant Sun      5  
 Cried thro' his worlds *well done!*

ON love, on grief, on every human thing,  
 Time sprinkles Lethe's water with his wing.

x. *Love and Age*

*Lugh Hunt's Journal* (1850)

LOVE flies with bow unstrung when Time appears,  
 And trembles at the approach of heavy years.  
 A few bright feathers leaves he in his flight,  
 Quite beyond call, but not forgotten quite.

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

FAIR Love! and fairer Hope! we play'd together,  
 When ye were little ones, for many a day,  
 Sometimes in fine, sometimes in gloomier weather:  
 Is it not hard to part so soon in May?

THERE is a time when the romance of life  
Should be shut up, and closed with double clasp:  
Better that this be done before the dust  
That none can blow away falls into it.

OUR youth was happy: why repine  
That, like the Year's, Life's days decline?  
'Tis well to mingle with the mould  
When we ourselves alike are cold,  
And when the only tears we shed 5  
Are of the dying on the dead.

WHY do our joys depart  
For cares to seize the heart?  
I know not. Nature says,  
Obey; and man obeys.  
I see, and know not why 5  
Thorns live and roses die.

ALL is not over while the shade  
Of parting life, if now aslant,  
Rests on the scene whereon it play'd  
And taught a docile heart to pant.  
Autumn is passing by; his day 5  
Shines mildly yet on gather'd sheaves,  
And, tho the grape be pluckt away,  
Its colour glows amid the leaves.

THERE falls with every wedding chime  
A feather from the wing of Time.  
You pick it up, and say 'How fair  
To look upon its colours are!'



Another drops day after day  
 Unheeded ; not one word you say.  
 When bright and dusky are blown past,  
 Upon the herse there nods the last.

## xvii

GOD scatters beauty as he scatters flowers  
 O'er the wide earth, and tells us all are ours.  
 A hundred lights in every temple burn,  
 And at each shrine I bend my knee in turn.

## xviii-xx

*Dry Sticks* (1858)

## xviii

How calm, O life, is thy decline!  
 Ah! it is only when the sun  
 His hot and headstrong course hath run,  
 Heaven's guiding stars serenely shine.

## xix

LIFE's torne Romance we thumb throughout the day:  
 Cast it aside: 'tis better this be done  
 Ere fall between its leaves the dust that none  
 Can blow away.

## xx

LIFE hurries by, and who can stay  
 One winged Hour upon her way?  
 The broken trellis then restore  
 And train the woodbine round the door.

## ON HIMSELF

i-xii

## HIS LIFE AND FAMILY

i. *On Swift Joining Avon near Rugby**Examiner* (1852)

SILENT and modest Brook! who dippest here  
 Thy foot in Avon as if childish fear  
 Withheld thee for a moment, wend along;  
     Go, followed by my song,  
 Sung in such easy numbers as they use 5  
 Who turn in fondness to the Tuscan Muse,  
 And such as often have flow'd down on me  
     From my own Fiesole.  
 I watch thy placid smile, nor need to say  
     That Tasso wove one looser lay, 10  
 And Milton took it up to dry the tear  
     Dropping on Lycidas's bier.  
 In youth how often at thy side I wander'd!  
 What golden hours, hours numberless, were squander'd  
     Among thy sedges, while sometimes 15  
     I meditated native rhymes,  
 And sometimes stumbled upon Latian feet;  
     Then, where soft mole-built seat  
     Invited me, I noted down  
     What must full surely win the crown, 20  
 But first impatiently vain efforts made  
 On broken pencil with a broken blade.  
     Anon, of lighter heart, I threw  
     My hat where circling plover flew,  
 And once I shouted til, instead of plover, 25  
 There sprang up half a damsel, half a lover.  
 I would not twice be barbarous; on I went . .  
 And two heads sank amid the pillowing bent.

Pardon me, gentle Stream, if rhyme  
 Holds up these records in the face of Time: 30  
 Among the falling leaves some birds yet sing,  
 And Autumn hath his butterflies like Spring.  
 Thou canst not turn thee back, thou canst not see  
     Reflected what hath ceast to be:  
     Haply thou little knowest why 35  
     I check this levity, and sigh.  
 Thou never knewest her whose radiant morn  
     Lighted my path to Love; she bore thy name,  
 She whom no Grace was tardy to adorn,  
     Whom one low voice pleas'd more than louder fame:  
 She now is past my praises: from her urn 41  
     To thine, with reverence due, I turn.  
 O silver-braided Swift! no victim ever  
     Was sacrificed to thee,  
 Nor hast thou carried to that sacred River 45  
 Vases of myrrh, nor hast thou run to see  
 A band of Mænads toss their tymbrels high  
 Mid *io-evokes* to their Deity.  
 But holy ashes have bestrewn thy stream  
     Under the mingled gleam 50  
 Of swords and torches, and the chaunt of Rome,  
     When Wiclif's lowly tomb  
     Thro' its thick briars was burst  
     By frantic priests accurst;  
 For he had entered and laid bare the lies 55  
 That pave the labyrinth of their mysteries.  
     We part . . but one more look!  
     Silent and modest Brook!

ii. *Ipsley*

S. Colvin, *Landor* (1881)

I HOPE in vain to see again  
 Ipsley's peninsular domain.

In youth 'twas there I used to scare  
 A whirring bird or scampering hare,  
 And leave my book within a nook 5  
 Where alders lean above the brook,  
 To walk beyond the third millpond,  
 And meet a maiden fair and fond  
 Expecting me beneath a tree  
 Of shade for two but not for three. 10  
 Ah! my old yew, far out of view,  
 Why must I bid you both adieu.

iii. *My Homes*

*Dry Sticks* (1858)

HOME! I have changed thee often: on the brink  
 Of Arrowe early I began to think,  
 Where the dark alders, closing overhead,  
 Across the meadow but one shadow shed.  
 Lantony then received me for a while 5  
 And saw me musing in the ruin'd aile:  
 Then loitered I in Paris; then in Tours,  
 Where Ronsard sang erewhile his loose amours,  
 And where the loftier Beranger retires  
 To sing what Freedom, and what Mirth, inspires. 10  
 From France to Italy my steps I bent  
 And pitcht at Arno's side my household tent.  
 Six years the Medicæan palace held  
 My wandering Lares; then they went afield,  
 Where the hewn rocks of Fiesole impend 15  
 O'er Doccia's dell, and fig and olive blend.  
 There the twin streams in Affrico unite,  
 One dimly seen, the other out of sight,  
 But ever playing in his smoothen'd bed  
 Of polisht stone, and willing to be led 20  
 Where clustering vines protect him from the sun,  
 Never too grave to smile, too tired to run.

Here, by the lake, Boccaccio's *Fair Brigade*  
 Beguiled the hours and tale for tale repaid.

How happy! O how happy! had I been 25  
 With friends and children in this quiet scene!  
 Its quiet was not destined to be mine;  
 'Twas hard to keep, 'twas harder to resign.  
 Now seek I (now Life says, *My gates I close*)  
 A solitary and a late repose. 30

#### iv. *A Sister's Death*

*Examiner* (1854)

SHARP crocus wakes the froward year;  
 In their old haunts birds reappear;  
 From yonder elm, yet black with rain,  
 The cushat looks deep down for grain  
 Thrown on the gravel-walk; here comes  
 The redbreast to the sill for crumbs.  
 Fly off! fly off! I can not wait  
 To welcome ye, as she of late.  
 The earliest of my friends is gone.  
 Alas! almost my only one!  
 The few as dear, long wafted o'er,  
 Await me on a sunnier shore.

#### v. *Fiesolan Idyl*

*Gebir and Other Poems* (1831)

HERE, where precipitate Spring with one light bound  
 Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires;  
 And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,  
 Soft airs, that want the lute to play with them,  
 And softer sighs, that know not what they want; 5  
 Under a wall, beneath an orange-tree  
 Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones

Of sights in Fiesole right up above,  
 While I was gazing a few paces off  
 At what they seemed to show me with their nods, 10  
 Their frequent whispers and their pointing shoots,  
 A gentle maid came down the garden-steps  
 And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.  
 I heard the branches rustle, and stept forth  
 To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat, 15  
 (Such I believed it must be) ; for sweet scents  
 Are the swift vehicles of stil sweeter thoughts,  
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory  
 That would let drop without them her best stores.  
 They bring me tales of youth and tones of love, 20  
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way  
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die,  
 Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart,  
 Among their kindred in their native place.  
 I never pluck the rose ; the violet's head 25  
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank  
 And not reproacht me ; the ever-sacred cup  
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
 Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of gold.  
 I saw the light that made the glossy leaves 30  
 More glossy ; the fair arm, the fairer cheek  
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit ;  
 I saw the foot, that, altho half-erect  
 From its grey slipper, could not lift her up  
 To what she wanted : I held down a branch 35  
 And gather'd her some blossoms, since their hour  
 Was come, and bees had wounded them, and flies  
 Of harder wing were working their way thro  
 And scattering them in fragments under foot.  
 So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved, 40  
 Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,  
 For such appear the petals when detach't,

Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,  
 And like snow not seen thro, by eye or sun :  
 Yet every one her gown received from me 45  
 Was fairer than the first . . I thought not so,  
 But so she praised them to reward my care.  
 I said: *you find the largest.*

*This indeed,*

Cried she, *is large and sweet.*

She held one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take 50  
 She knew not, nor did I ; but taking it  
 Would best have solved (and this she felt) her doubts.  
 I dared not touch it ; for it seemed a part  
 Of her own self ; fresh, full, the most mature  
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom ; with a touch 55  
 To fall, and yet unfallen.

She drew back

The boon she tendered, and then, finding not  
 The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,  
 Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

### vi. *The Fiesolan Villa*

*Works (1846)*

WHERE three huge dogs are ramping yonder  
 Before that villa with its tower,  
 No braver boys, no father fonder,  
 Ever prolong'd the moonlight hour.  
 Often, to watch their sports unseen, 5  
 Along the broad stone bench he lies,  
 The oleander-stems between  
 And citron-boughs to shade his eyes.  
 The clouds now whiten far away,  
 And villas glimmer thick below, 10  
 And windows catch the quivering ray,  
 Obscure one minute's space ago.

Orchards and vine-knolls maple-propt  
 Rise radiant round: the meads are dim,  
 As if the milky-way had dropt 15  
 And fill'd Valdarno to the brim.  
 Unseen beneath us, on the right,  
 The abbey with unfinisht front  
 Of checker'd marble, black and white,  
 And on the left the Doccia's font. 20  
 Eastward, two ruin'd castles rise  
 Beyond Maiano's mossy mill,  
 Winter and Time their enemies,  
 Without their warder, stately still.  
 The heaps around them there will grow 25  
 Higher, as years sweep by, and higher,  
 Till every battlement laid low  
 Is seized and trampled by the briar.  
 That line so lucid is the weir  
 Of Rovezzano: but behold 30  
 The graceful tower of Giotto there,  
 And Duomo's cross of freshen'd gold.  
 We can not tell, so far away,  
 Whether the city's tongue be mute,  
 We only hear some lover play 35  
 (If sighs be play) the sighing flute.

vii. *Farewell to Italy*

*Book of Beauty* (1837)

I LEAVE thee, beauteous Italy! no more  
 From the high terraces, at even-tide,  
 To look supine into thy depths of sky,  
 Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,  
 Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses 5  
 Bordering the channel of the milky-way.  
 Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams  
 Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico



Murmur to me but in the poet's song.  
 I did believe, (what have I not believed?) 10  
 Weary with age, but unoppressed by pain,  
 To close in thy soft clime my quiet day,  
 And rest my bones in the Mimosa's shade.  
 Hope! Hope! few ever cherisht thee so little;  
 Few are the heads thou hast so rarely raised; 15  
 But thou didst promise this, and all was well.  
 For we are fond of thinking where to lie  
 When every pulse hath ceast, when the lone heart  
 Can lift no aspiration . . . reasoning  
 As if the sight were unimpaired by death,— 20  
 Were unobstructed by the coffin-lid,  
 And the sun cheered corruption!

Over all

The smiles of Nature shed a potent charm,  
 And light us to our chamber at the grave.

viii. *To My Child Carlino*

*Pentameron* (1837)

CARLINO! what art thou about, my boy?  
 Often I ask that question, though in vain;  
 For we are far apart: ah! therefore 'tis  
 I often ask it; not in such a tone  
 As wiser fathers do, who know too well. 5  
 Were we not children, you and I together?  
 Stole we not glances from each other's eyes?  
 Swore we not secrecy in such misdeeds?  
 Well could we trust each other. Tell me, then,  
 What thou art doing. Carving out thy name, 10  
 Or haply mine, upon my favourite seat,  
 With the new knife I sent thee over-sea?  
 Or hast thou broken it, and hid the hilt  
 Among the myrtles, starr'd with flowers, behind?  
 Or under that high throne whence fifty lilies 15

(With sworded tuberoses dense around)  
 Lift up their heads at once . . . not without fear  
 That they were looking at thee all the while?

Does Cincirillo follow thee about?

Inverting one swart foot suspensively, 20

And wagging his dread jaw, at every chirp

Of bird above him on the olive-branch?

Frighten him then away! 'twas he who slew

Our pigeons, our white pigeons, peacock-tailed,

That fear'd not you and me. . . alas, nor him! 25

I flattened his striped sides along my knee,

And reasoned with him on his bloody mind,

Till he looked blandly, and half-closed his eyes

To ponder on my lecture in the shade.

I doubt his memory much, his heart a little, 30

And in some minor matters (may I say it?)

Could wish him rather sager. But from thee

God hold back wisdom yet for many years!

Whether in early season or in late

It always comes high priced. For thy pure breast 35

I have no lesson; it for me has many.

Come, throw it open then! What sports, what cares

(Since there are none too young for these) engage

Thy busy thoughts? Are you again at work,

Walter and you, with those sly labourers, 40

Geppo, Giovanni, Cecco, and Poeta,

To build more solidly your broken dam

Among the poplars, whence the nightingale

Inquisitively watched you all day long?

I was not of your council in the scheme, 45

Or might have saved you silver without end,

And sighs too without number. Art thou gone

Below the mulberry, where that cold pool

Urged to devise a warmer, and more fit

For mighty swimmers, swimming three abreast? 50

Or art thou panting in this summer noon  
 Upon the lowest step before the hall,  
 Drawing a slice of watermelon, long  
 As Cupid's bow, athwart thy wetted lips  
 (Like one who plays Pan's pipe) and letting drop 55  
 The sable seeds from all their separate cells,  
 And leaving bays profound and rocks abrupt,  
 Redder than coral round Calypso's cave?

ix. *Lines on Torquay*

*The Keepsake* (1841)

WHATEVER England's coasts display,  
 The fairest scenes are thine, Torquay!  
 Nor could Liguria's tepid shore  
 With palm and aloe please me more.  
 Sorrento softer tales may tell, 5  
 Parthenope sound louder shell,  
 Amalfi, Ocean's proudest boast,  
 Show loftier hills and livelier coast;  
 But, with thy dark oak woods behind,  
 Here stretched before the eastern wind 10  
 The sails that from their Zuyderzee  
 Brought him who left our fathers free.  
 Yet (shame upon me!) I sometimes  
 Have sigh'd awhile for sunnier climes,  
 Where, though no mariner, I too 15  
 Whistled aloft my little crew:  
 And now to spar, and now to fence,  
 And now to fathom Shakspeare's sense,  
 And now to trace the hand divine  
 That guided purest Raffael's line; 20  
 And, when the light at last was gone,  
 Weber led all to Oberon.

x. *On His Birthday*1841. *Works* (1846)

WHAT, of house and home bereft,  
 For my birthday what is left?  
 Not the hope that any more  
 Can be blest like those of yore,  
 Not the wish; for wishes now 5  
 Fall like flowers from aching brow,  
 When the jovial feast is past,  
 And when heaven, with clouds o'ercast,  
 Strikes the colours from the scene,  
 And no herb on earth is green. 10  
 What is left me after all?  
 What, beside my funeral?  
 Bid it wait a little while,  
 Just to let one thoughtful smile  
 Its accustom'd time abide: 15  
 There are left two boons beside . .  
 Health, and eyes that yet can see  
 Eyes not coldly turn'd from me.

xi. *To My Daughter**Blackwood's Magazine* (1843)

BY that dejected city, Arno runs,  
 Where Ugolino claspt his famisht sons.  
 There wert thou born, my Julia! there thine eyes  
 Return'd as bright a blue to vernal skies.  
 And thence, my little wanderer! when the Spring 5  
 Advanced, thee, too, the hours on silent wing  
 Brought, while anemonies were quivering round,  
 And pointed tulips pierced the purple ground,  
 Where stood fair Florence: there thy voice first blest  
 My ear, and sank like balm into my breast: 10  
 For many griefs had wounded it, and more  
 Thy little hands could lighten were in store.

But why revert to griefs? Thy sculptured brow  
 Dispels from mine its darkest cloud even now.  
 What then the bliss to see again thy face, 15  
 And all that Rumour has announced of grace!  
 I urge, with fevered breast, the four-month day.  
 O! could I sleep to wake again in May.

xii. *Ingratitude*

1859. T. J. Wise, *Catalogue of the Ashley Library*

CAN this be he whom in his infancy,  
 Hour after hour, I carried in my arms,  
 When neither nurse nor mother could appease  
 The froward wailing?  
 Thus went on two years;  
 I laid the burden softly in its crib, 5  
 And hardly dared to kiss it lest it wake.

For whom were planted on thy grassy slopes  
 Lantony, larch and oak, mile after mile,  
 Guarded from rapine and now lifting high  
 These their stout arms, and those their slender spires? 10  
 By whom, ancestral Ipsley, were thy groves  
 Held sacred? at whose hand rose cypresses  
 Beyond the solitary cedar twins,  
 (Now fifty winters old) and spreading wide  
 Their hospitable arms. 15

Tender are aged feet; in vain I plead  
 For one smooth walk, where gravel stones are sharp  
 Aside the villa by my care adorn'd,  
 With ancient marbles, with Salvator's scenes  
 And Raffael's and Correggio's forms divine. 20  
 I plead in vain even for the books I wrote,  
 And for those dearer given me by my friends,  
 Some distant, and some dead: beloved the more,  
 Nor undervalued those from men whose names  
 I hope my own may live with, years to come. 25

All, all I gave ; and what is the return ?  
Not even a bell-rope at my sick-bed-side.

O thou of largest, wisest, tenderest heart,  
Truly thou sayest that a serpent's tooth  
Wounds not so sharply as a thankless child.

30

## xiii-xviii

## HIS WRITINGS

xiii. From *Apology for Gebir**Examiner* (1854)

SIXTY the years since *Fidler* bore  
My grouse bag up the Bala moor,  
Above the lake, along the lea  
Where gleams the darkly yellow Dee.  
Thro' crags, o'er cliffs, I carried there  
My verses with parental care,  
But left them, and went home again  
To wing the birds upon the plain.  
With heavier luggage half-forgot,  
For many months they followed not.  
When over Tawey's sands they came,  
Brighter flew up my winter flame,  
And each old cricket sang alert  
With joy that they had come unhurt.

5

10

## xiv

From *A Satire on Satirists* (1836)

Twice is almighty Homer far above  
Troy and her towers, Olympus and his Jove.  
First, when the God-led Priam bends before  
Him sprung from Thetis, dark with Hector's gore:  
A second time, when both alike have bled,  
And Agamemnon speaks among the dead.

5

Call'd up by Genius in an after-age,  
 That awful spectre shook the Athenian stage.  
 From eve to morn, from morn to parting night,  
 Father and daughter stood before my sight. 10  
 I felt the looks they gave, the words they said,  
 And reconducted each serener shade.  
 Ever shall these to me be well-spent days,  
 Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet the praise.  
 Far from the footstool of the tragick throne, 15  
 I am tragedian in this scene alone.

## XV

*Works (1846)*

O FRIENDS! who have accompanied thus far  
 My quickening steps, sometimes where sorrow sate  
 Dejected, and sometimes where valour stood  
 Resplendent, right before us; here perhaps  
 We best might part; but one to valour dear 5  
 Comes up in wrath and calls me worse than foe,  
 Reminding me of gifts too ill deserved.  
 I must not blow away the flowers he gave,  
 Altho' now faded; I must not efface  
 The letters his own hand has traced for me. 10  
 Here terminates my park of poetry.  
 Look out no longer for extensive woods,  
 For clusters of unlopt and lofty trees,  
 With stately animals coucht under them,  
 Or grottoes with deep wells of water pure, 15  
 And ancient figures in the solid rock:  
 Come, with our sunny pasture be content,  
 Our narrow garden and our homestead croft,  
 And tillage not neglected. Love breathes round;  
 Love, the bright atmosphere, the vital air, 20  
 Of youth; without it life and death are one.

xvi. *With An Album**Works* (1846)

I KNOW not whether I am proud,  
 But this I know, I hate the crowd:  
 Therefore pray let me disengage  
 My verses from the motley page,  
 Where others far more sure to please 5  
 Pour out their choral song with ease.  
 And yet perhaps, if some should tire  
 With too much froth or too much fire,  
 There is an ear that may incline  
 Even to words so dull as mine. 10

## xvii

*Works* (1846)

IDLE and light are many things you see  
 In these my closing pages: blame not me.  
 However rich and plenteous the repast,  
 Nuts, almonds, biscuits, wafers, come at last.

## xviii

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

LATELY our poets loiter'd in green lanes,  
 Content to catch the ballads of the plains,  
 I fancied I had strength enough to climb  
 A loftier station at no distant time,  
 And might securely from intrusion doze 5  
 Upon the flowers thro' which Ilissus flows.  
 In those pale olive grounds all voices cease,  
 And from afar dust fills the paths of Greece.  
 My slumber broken and my doublet torn,  
 I find the laurel also bears a thorn. 10



## xix

*Works* (1846)

Scarcely on any bough is heard  
Joyous, or even unjoyous, bird  
The whole wood through.

Let him ; now heaven is overcast,  
And spring and summer both are past,  
    And all things sweet.

*Examiner* (I852)

I was indocile at an age  
 When better boys were taught,  
 But thou at length hast made me sage,  
 If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,  
Too little they from me, 10  
But thou hast pointed well the pen  
That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,  
One vile, the other vain ;  
One's scourge, the other's telescope, 15  
I shall not see again :

Rather what lies before my feet  
 My notice shall engage . .  
 He who hath braved Youth's dizzy heat  
 Dreads not the frost of Age.

20

## xxi-xxx

## ANTICIPATIONS OF DEATH

xxi. *For An Epitaph at Fiesole**Gebir and Other Poems* (1831)

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their shade,  
 In calm repose at last is Landor laid;  
 For ere he slept he saw them planted here  
 By her his soul had ever held most dear,  
 And he had lived enough when he had dried her tear. 5

## xxii

*Examiner* (1838)

FATE! I have askt few things of thee,  
 And fewer have to ask.  
 Shortly, thou knowest, I shall be  
 No more . . . then con thy task.

If one be left on earth so late 5  
 Whose love is like the past,  
 Tell her, in whispers, gentle Fate,  
 Not even love must last.

Tell her, I leave the noisy feast  
 Of life, a little tired; 10  
 Amidst its pleasures few possess  
 And many undesired.

Tell her, with steady pace to come  
 And, where my laurels lie,  
 To throw the freshest on the tomb 15  
 When it has caught her sigh.

Tell her, to stand some steps apart  
 From others, on that day,  
 And check the tear (if tear should start)  
 Too precious for dull clay. 20

xxiii. *Good-Bye**Works* (1846)

LOVED, when my love from all but thee had flown,  
 Come near me; seat thee on this level stone;  
 And, ere thou lookest o'er the churchyard wall,  
 To catch, as once we did, yon waterfall,  
 Look a brief moment on the turf between, 5  
 And see a tomb thou never yet hast seen.  
 My spirit will be sooth'd to hear once more  
*Good-bye* as gently spoken as before.

## xxiv

*Works* (1846)

THE place where soon I think to lie,  
 In its old creviced wall hard-by,  
 Rears many a weed.  
 Whoever leads you there, will you  
 Drop slyly in a grain or two 5  
 Of wall-flower seed?  
 I shall not see it, and (too sure)  
 I shall not ever know that your  
 Dear hand was there;  
 But the rich odor some fine day. 10  
 Shall (what I can not do) repay  
 That little care.

xxv. *Dying Speech of an Old Philosopher**Examiner* (1849)

I STROVE with none, for none was worth my strife:  
 Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art:  
 I warm'd both hands before the fire of Life;  
 It sinks; and I am ready to depart.

*Examiner* (1850)

YEARS, many parti-color'd years,  
 Some have crept on, and some have flown,  
 Since first before me fell those tears  
 I never could see fall alone.

Years, not so many, are to come, 5  
 Years not so varied, when from you  
 One more will fall: when, carried home,  
 I see it not, nor hear *adieu!*

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

DEATH stands above me, whispering low  
 I know not what into my ear:  
 Of his strange language all I know  
 Is, there is not a word of fear.

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

DEATH, tho I see him not, is near  
 And grudges me my eightieth year.  
 Now, I would give him all these last  
 For one that fifty have run past.  
 Ah! he strikes all things, all alike, 5  
 But bargains: those he will not strike.

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

NEVER must my bones be laid  
 Under the mimosa's shade.  
 He to whom I gave my all  
 Swept away her guardian wall,  
 And her green and level plot 5  
 Green or level now is not.

xxx. *Widcombe Churchyard*

*Letters (1897)*

WIDCOMBE! few seek in thee their resting-place,  
Yet I, when I have run my weary race,  
Will throw my bones upon thy churchyard turf;  
Although malignant waves on foren shore  
Have stranded me, and I shall lift no more  
My hoary head above the hissing surf.  
Perhaps my dreams may not be over yet,  
And what I could not in long life forget  
May float around that image once too dear;  
Perhaps some gentle maiden passing by,  
May heave from true-love heart a generous sigh,  
And say, 'Be happier, thou reposing here.'

## xxxi

*Letters (1899)*

THE grave is open, soon to close  
On him who sang the charms of Rose,  
Her pensive brow, her placid eye,  
Her smile, angelic purity,  
Her voice so sweet, her speech so sage  
It checkt wild Youth and cheer'd dull Age,  
Her truth when others were untrue,  
And vows forgotten.

5

Friends, adieu!

THE grave is open . . . O how far  
From under that bright morning star.

10

IAN THE

## i

*Simonidea* (1806)

I OFTEN ask upon whose arm she leans,  
 She whom I dearly love ;  
 And if she visit much the crowded scenes  
 Where mimic passions move.  
 There, mighty powers ! assert your just controul, 5  
 Alarm her thoughtless breast ;  
 Breathe soft suspicion o'er her yielding soul—  
 But never break its rest.  
 O let some faithful lover, absent long,  
 To sudden bliss return ; 10  
 Then Landor's name shall tremble from her tongue,  
 Her cheek through tears shall burn.

## ii-iv

*Gebir and Other Poems* (1831)

## ii

AWAY my verse ; and never fear,  
As men before such beauty do ;  
On you she will not look severe,  
She will not turn her eyes from you.

Some happier graces could I lend  
That in her memory you should live,  
Some little blemishes might blend . .  
For it would please her to forgive.

## iii

PAST ruin'd Iliion Helen lives,  
Alcestis rises from the shades;  
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that gives  
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil 5  
 Hide all the peopled hills you see,  
 The gay, the proud, while lovers hail  
 In distant ages you and me.

The tear for fading beauty check,  
 For passing glory cease to sigh; 10  
 One form shall rise above the wreck,  
 One name, Ianthe, shall not die.

## iv

IANTHE! you resolve to cross the sea!  
 A path forbidden *me!*  
 Remember, while the Sun his blessing sheds  
 Upon the mountain-heads,  
 How often we have watcht him laying down 5  
 His brow, and dropt our own  
 Against each other's, and how faint and short  
 And sliding the support!  
 What will succede it now? Mine is unblest,  
 Ianthe! nor will rest 10  
 But on the very thought that swells with pain.  
 O bid me hope again!  
 O give me back what Earth, what (without you)  
 Not Heaven itself can do—  
 One of the golden days that we have past, 15  
 And let it be my last!  
 Or else the gift would be, however sweet,  
 Fragile and incomplete.

## v, vi

*Examiner* (1838)

## v

IANTHE! since our parting day  
 Pleasure and you were long away.  
 Leave you then all that strove to please  
 In proud Vienna's palaces

To soothe your Landor's heart agen 5  
 And roam once more our hazel glen?  
 About my temples what a hum  
 Of freshly wakened thoughts is come!  
 Ah! not without a throb or two  
 That shake me as they used to do. 10  
 Where alders rise up dark and dense  
 But just behind the wayside fence,  
 A stone there is in yonder nook  
 Which once I borrowed of the brook;  
 And the first hind who fain would cross 15  
 Must leap five yards or feel its loss.  
 You sate beside me on that stone,  
 Rather (not much) too wide for one.  
 Untoward stone! and never quite  
 (Tho' often very near it) right, 20  
 And putting to sore shifts my wit  
 To roll it out, then steady it,  
 And then to prove that it must be  
 Too hard for any one but me.  
 Ianthe haste! ere June declines 25  
 We'll write upon it all these lines.

vi. *To Fisher the Artist*

CONCEAL not Time's misdeeds, but on my brow  
 Retrace his mark:  
 Let the retiring hair be silvery now  
 That once was dark:  
 Eyes that reflected images too bright 5  
 Let clouds o'ercast,  
 And from the tablet be abolisht quite  
 The cheerful past.  
 Yet Care's deep lines should one from waken'd Mirth  
 Steal softly o'er, 10  
 Perhaps on me the fairest of the earth  
 May glance once more.



THE torch of Love dispels the gloom  
 Of life, and animates the tomb;  
 But never let it idly flare  
 On gazers in the open air,  
 Nor turn it quite away from one  
 To whom it serves for moon and sun,  
 And who alike in night or day  
 Without it could not find his way.

5

SOON, O Ianthe! life is o'er,  
 And sooner beauty's heavenly smile:  
 Grant only (and I ask no more),  
 Let love remain that little while.

It often comes into my head  
 That we may dream when we are dead,  
 But I am far from sure we do.  
 O that it were so! then my rest  
 Would be indeed among the blest;  
 I should for ever dream of you.

5

FROM you, Ianthe, little troubles pass  
 Like little ripples down a sunny river;  
 Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,  
 Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.

You tell me I must come again  
 Now buds and blooms appear:  
 Ah! never fell one word in vain  
 Of yours on mortal ear.

You say the birds are busy now 5  
 In hedgerow, brake, and grove,  
 And slant their eyes to find the bough  
 That best conceals their love:  
 How many warble from the spray!  
 How many on the wing! 10  
 'Yet, yet,' say you, 'one voice away  
 I miss the sound of spring.'  
 How little could that voice express,  
 Beloved, when we met!  
 But other sounds hath tenderness, 15  
 Which neither shall forget.

## xii

ON the smooth brow and clustering hair  
 Myrtle and rose! your wreath combine;  
 The duller olive I would wear,  
 Its constancy, its peace, be mine.

## xiii

PURSUITS! alas, I now have none,  
 But idling where were once pursuits,  
 Often, all morning quite alone,  
 I sit upon those twisted roots  
 Which rise above the grass, and shield 5  
 Our harebell, when the churlish year  
 Catches her coming first afield;  
 And she looks pale tho' spring is near;  
 I chase the violets, that would hide  
 Their little prudish heads away, 10  
 And argue with the rills, that chide  
 When we discover them at play.

## xiv

No, thou hast never griev'd but I griev'd too;  
 Smiled thou hast often when no smile of mine  
 Could answer it. The sun himself can give  
 But little colour to the desert sands.

PROUD word you never spoke, but you will speak  
 Four not exempt from pride some future day.  
 Resting on one white hand a warm wet cheek  
 Over my open volume you will say,  
 'This man loved *me!*' then rise and trip away. 5

## xvi

No, my own love of other years!  
 No, it must never be.  
 Much rests with you that yet endears,  
 Alas! but what with me? 5  
 Could those bright years o'er me revolve  
 So gay, o'er you so fair,  
 The pearl of life we would dissolve  
 And each the cup might share.  
 You show that truth can ne'er decay,  
 Whatever fate befalls; 10  
 I, that the myrtle and the bay  
 Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

## xvii

'Do you remember me? or are you proud?'  
 Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd crowd,  
 Ianthe said, and lookt into my eyes.  
 'A *yes*, a *yes*, to both: for Memory  
 Where you but once have been must ever be, 5  
 And at your voice Pride from his throne must rise.'

## xviii

MANY may yet recal the hours  
 That saw thy lover's chosen flowers  
 Nodding and dancing in the shade  
 Thy dark and wavy tresses made:

On many a brain is pictured yet 5  
 Thy languid eye's dim violet:  
 But who among them all foresaw  
 How the sad snows which never thaw  
 Upon that head one day should lie,  
 And love but glimmer from that eye! 10

## xix

TWENTY years hence my eyes may grow  
 If not quite dim, yet rather so,  
 Still yours from other they shall know  
     Twenty years hence.  
 Twenty years hence tho' it may hap 5  
 That I be call'd to take a nap  
 In a cool cell where thunder-clap  
     Was never heard.  
 There breathe but o'er my arch of grass  
 A not too sadly sigh'd *Alas*, 10  
 And I shall catch, ere you can pass,  
     That winged word.

## xx, xxi

*Dry Sticks* (1858)

## xx

THERE is a flower I wish to wear,  
 But not until first worne by you . .  
 Hearts-ease . . of all Earth's flowers most rare ;  
 Bring it ; and bring enough for two.

## xxi

THOU Cyclamen of crumpled horn  
 Toss not thy head aside ;  
 Repose it where the Loves were born,  
 In that warm dell abide.

Whatever flowers, on mountain, field,                   5  
 Or garden, may arise,  
 Thine only that pure odor yield  
 Which never can suffice.  
 Emblem of her I've loved so long,  
 Go, carry her this little song.                   10

## xxii

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

WELL I remember how you smiled  
 To see me write your name upon  
 The soft sea-sand . . . 'O! what a child!  
*You think you're writing upon stone!*'  
 I have since written what no tide                   5  
 Shall ever wash away, what men  
 Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide  
 And find Ianthé's name agen.

## xxiii, xxiv

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

## xxiii

VERSAILLES! Versailles! thou shalt not keep  
 Her whom this heart yet holds most dear:  
 In her own country she shall sleep;  
 Her epitaph be graven here.

## xxiv

THOUGH other friends have died in other days,  
 One grave there is where memory sinks and stays.

## xxv

1854. *Dry Sticks* (1858)

My pictures blacken in their frames  
 As night comes on,  
 And youthful maids and wrinkled dames  
 Are now all one.

Death of the day! a sterner Death 5  
 Did worse before;  
 The fairest form, the sweetest breath,  
 Away he bore.

## ROSE AYLMER

### i

1798. *Letters* (1897)

WHERE all must love, but one can win the prize,  
 The others walk away with tears and sighs.  
 With tears and sighs let them walk off, while I  
 Walk for three miles in better company.

### ii

1806. *Works* (1846)

AH what avails the sceptred race,  
 Ah what the form divine!  
 What every virtue, every grace!  
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.  
 Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes 5  
 May weep, but never see,  
 A night of memories and of sighs  
 I consecrate to thee.

### iii. *Abertawy*

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

It was no dull tho' lonely strand  
 Where thyme ran o'er the solid sand,  
 Where snap-dragons with yellow eyes  
 Lookt down on crowds that could not rise,  
 Where Spring had fill'd with dew the moss 5  
 In winding dells two strides across.  
 There tiniest thorniest roses grew  
 To their full size, nor shared the dew:  
 Acute and jealous, they took care  
 That none their softer seat should share; 10

A weary maid was not to stay  
 Without one for such churls as they.  
 I tugg'd and lugg'd with all my might  
 To tear them from their roots outright ;  
 At last I did it . . . eight or ten . . . 15  
 We both were snugly seated then ;  
 But then she saw a half-round bead,  
 And cried, *Good gracious! how you bleed!*  
 Gently she wiped it off, and bound  
 With timorous touch that dreadful wound. 20  
 To lift it from its nurse's knee  
 I fear'd, and quite as much fear'd she,  
 For might it not increase the pain  
 And make the wound burst out again?  
 She coaxed it to lie quiet there 25  
 With a low tune I bent to hear ;  
 How close I bent I quite forget,  
 I only know I hear it yet.  
 Where is she now? Call'd far away,  
 By one she dared not disobey, 30  
 To those proud halls, for youth unfit,  
 Where princes stand and judges sit.  
 Where Ganges rolls his widest wave  
 She dropt her blossom in the grave ;  
 Her noble name she never changed, 35  
 Nor was her nobler heart estranged.

## ROSE THE SECOND

### i. *Two Birthdays*

1838. *Letters* (1899)

TEN days, ten only, intervene  
 Within your natal day  
 And mine, O Rose!—but wide between  
 What *years* there spread away.

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

To his young Rose an old man said,  
 'You will be sweet when I am dead:  
 Where skies are brightest we shall meet,  
 And there will you be yet more sweet,  
 Leaving your winged company 5  
 To waste an idle thought on me.'

iii. *Prologue**Andrea of Hungary and Giovanna of Naples* (1839)

My verse was for thine eyes alone,  
 Alone by them was it repaid;  
 And still thine ear records the tone  
 Of thy grey minstrel, thoughtful maid!  
 Amid the pomps of regal state, 5  
 Where thou, O Rose! art call'd to move,  
 Thee only Virtue can elate,  
 She only guide thy steps to Love.  
 Sometimes, when dark is each saloon,  
 Dark every lamp that crown'd the Seine, 10  
 Memory hangs low Amalfi's moon  
 And lights thee o'er Salerno's plain,  
 And onward, where Giovanna bore  
 Keen anguish from envenom'd tongues:  
 Her fame my pages shall restore, 15  
 Thy pity shall requite her wrongs.

1839. *Works* (1846)

EVERYTHING tells me you are near;  
 The hail-stones bound along and melt,  
 In white array the clouds appear,  
 The spring and you our fields have felt.



Paris, I know is hard to quit ;  
 But you have left it ; and 'twere silly  
 To throw away more smiles and wit  
 Among the forests of Chantilly.  
 Her moss-paved cell your rose adorns  
 To tempt you ; and your cyclamen  
 Turns back his tiny twisted horns  
 As if he heard your voice again.

## v

*Works* (1846)

SUMMER has doft his latest green,  
 And Autumn ranged the barley-mows.  
 So long away then have you been ?  
 And are you coming back to close  
 The year ? It sadly wants repose.

## vi

*Book of Beauty* (1840)

THE basket upon which thy fingers bend,  
 Thou mayst remember in my Tuscan hall,  
 When the glad children, gazing on a friend,  
 From heedless arm let high-piled peaches fall  
 On the white marble, splashing to the wall.  
 Oh, were they present at this later hour !  
 Could they behold the form whole realms admire  
 Lean with such grace o'er cane and leaf and flower,  
 Happy once more would they salute their sire,  
 Nor wonder that her name still rests upon his lyre !

## vii

*Keepsake* (1845)

TAKE the last flowers your natal day  
 May ever from my hand receive !  
 Sweet as the former ones are they,  
 And sweet alike be those they leave.

Another in the year to come 5  
 May offer them to smiling eyes ;  
 The smile that cannot reach my tomb  
 Will add fresh radiance to the skies.

viii. *To A Bride*

*Works* (1846)

A STILL, serene, soft day ; enough of sun  
 To wreathe the cottage smoke like pine-tree snow,  
 Whiter than those white flowers the bride-maids wore ;  
 Upon the silent boughs the lissom air  
 Rested ; and, only when it went, they moved, 5  
 Nor more than under linnet springing off.  
 Such was the wedding-morn : the joyous Year  
 Lept over March and April up to May.  
 Regent of rising and of ebbing hearts,  
 Thyself borne on in cool serenity, 10  
 All heaven around and bending over thee,  
 All earth below and watchful of thy course !  
 Well hast thou chosen, after long demur  
 To aspirations from more realms than one.  
 Peace be with those thou leavest ! peace with thee ! 15  
 Is that enough to wish thee ? not enough,  
 But very much : for Love himself feels pain,  
 While brighter plumage shoots, to shed last year's ;  
 And one at home (how dear that one ! ) recalls  
 Thy name, and thou recallest one at home. 20  
 Yet turn not back thine eyes ; the hour of tears  
 Is over ; nor believe thou that Romance  
 Closes against pure Faith her rich domain.  
 Shall only blossoms flourish there ? Arise,  
 Far-sighted bride ! look forward ! clearer views 25  
 And higher hopes lie under calmer skies.  
 Fortune in vain call'd out to thee ; in vain  
 Rays from high regions darted ; Wit pour'd out

His sparkling treasures ; Wisdom laid his crown  
 Of richer jewels at thy reckless feet. 30  
 Well hast thou chosen. I repeat the words,  
 Adding as true ones, not untold before,  
 That incense must have fire for its ascent,  
 Else 'tis inert and can not reach the idol.  
 Youth is the sole equivalent of youth. 35  
 Enjoy it while it lasts ; and last it will ;  
 Love can prolong it in despite of Years.

ix. *Primrose to be Dried in a Book*

1846. *Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

HUMBLE flower ! the gift of Rose !  
 If today thy life must close,  
 Yet for ever shalt thou be  
 Just as fair and fresh to me ;  
 And when I am underground 5  
 Shalt among these leaves be found,  
 And the finder shall exclaim  
 'Up ! arise ! awake to fame !  
 He who gave thee length of days  
 Held her flower above his bays.' 10

x. *To Restormel*

1848. *Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

KNOWN as thou art to ancient Fame  
 My praise, Restormel, shall be scant :  
 The Muses gave thy sounding name,  
 The Graces thy inhabitant.

xi. *With a Portrait of Petrarch's Laura*  
*Letters* (1897)

IN her green vest and golden hair,  
 Laura is coming, so prepare :  
 The chaste Restormel can alone  
 Replace the loss of Avignon.

1858? *Poetical Works* (1937)

AH what happy days were those  
When I walkt alone with Rose;  
They were days of purest gold,  
Days when mortals grow not old.

1858. *Poetical Works* (1937)

WHY does the sun  
O'ershadow'd run  
So soon to-day?

Because he knows  
The brighter Rose  
Is on her way.

5

## THE THREE ROSES

*Examiner* (1855)

WHEN the buds began to burst,  
Long ago, with Rose the First  
I was walking; joyous then  
Far above all other men,  
Til before us up there stood  
Britonferry's oaken wood,  
Whispering '*Happy as thou art,*  
*Happiness and thou must part.*'  
Many summers have gone by  
Since a Second Rose and I  
(Rose from that same stem) have told  
This and other tales of old.  
She upon her wedding-day  
Carried home my tenderest lay:

5

10

From her lap I now have heard 15  
 Gleeeful, chirping, Rose the Third.  
 Not for *her* this hand of mine  
 Rhyme with nuptial wreath shall twine;  
 Cold and torpid it must lie,  
 Mute the tongue, and closed the eye. 20

## TO MISS ISABELLA PERCY

*Works* (1846)

If that old hermit laid to rest  
 Beneath your chapel-floor,  
 Could leave the regions of the blest  
 And visit earth once more:  
 If human sympathies could warm 5  
 His tranquil breast again,  
 Your innocence that breast could charm,  
 Perhaps your beauty pain.

## LADY BLESSINGTON

i

*Works* (1846)

I LEAVE for you to disunite  
 Frail flowers and lasting bays:  
 One, let me hope, you'll wear to-night,  
 The other all your days.

### ii. *In Memoriam*

*Examiner* (1850)

AGAIN, perhaps and only once again,  
 I turn my steps to London. Few the scenes  
 And few the friends that there delighted me  
 Will now delight me: some indeed remain,

ho' changed in features .. friend and scene .. both changed!  
 shall not watch my lilac burst her bud 6  
 1 that wide garden, that pure fount of air,  
 Where, risen ere the morns are warm and bright,  
 and stepping forth in very scant attire,  
 'midly, as became her in such garb, 10  
 he hastened prompt to call up slumbering Spring.  
 White and dim-purple breath'd my favorite pair  
 Under thy terrace, hospitable heart,  
 Whom twenty summers more and more endear'd;  
 Part on the Arno, part where every clime 15  
 sent its most graceful sons, to kiss thy hand,  
 To make the humble proud, the proud submiss,  
 Wiser the wisest, and the brave more brave.  
 Never, ah never now, shall we alight  
 Where the man-queen was born, or, higher up 20  
 The nobler region of a nobler soul,  
 Where breath'd his last the more than kingly man.  
 Thou sleepest, not forgotten, nor unmourn'd,  
 Beneath the chesnut shade by Saint Germain;  
 Meanwhile I wait the hour of my repose, 25  
 Not under Italy's serener sky,  
 Where Fiesole beheld me from above  
 Devising how my head most pleasantly  
 Might rest ere long, and how with such intent  
 I smooth'd a platform for my villagers, 30  
 (Tho' stood against me stubborn stony knoll  
 With cross-grain'd olives long confederate)  
 And brought together slender cypresses  
 And bridal myrtles, peering up between,  
 And bade the modest violet bear her part. 35  
 Dance, youths and maidens! tho' around my grave  
 Ye dance not, as I wisht; bloom, myrtles! bend  
 Protecting arms about them, cypresses!  
 I must not come among you; fare ye well!

## ELIZABETH ARUNDELL

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

NATURE! thou mayest fume and fret,  
 There's but one white violet;  
 Scatter o'er the vernal ground  
 Faint resemblances around,  
 Nature! I will tell thee yet  
 There's but one white violet. 5

ON BOOKS AND WRITERS  
ON A POET IN A WELSH CHURCHYARD*Gebir and Other Poems* (1831)

KIND souls! who strive what pious hand shall bring  
 The first-found crocus from reluctant Spring,  
 Or blow your wintry fingers while they strew  
 This sunless turf with rosemary and rue,  
 Bend o'er your lovers first, but mind to save  
 One sprig of each to trim a poet's grave. 5

## TO WORDSWORTH

1833. *Athenaeum* (1834)

THOSE who have laid the harp aside  
 And turn'd to idler things,  
 From very restlessness have tried  
 The loose and dusty strings;  
 And, catching back some favourite strain, 5  
 Run with it o'er the chords again.  
 But Memory is not a Muse,  
 O Wordsworth!—though 'tis said  
 They all descend from her, and use  
 To haunt her fountain-head: 10  
 That other men should work for me  
 In the rich mines of Poesie,

Pleases me better than the toil,  
 Of smoothing under hardened hand,  
 With attic emery and oil, 15  
 The shining point for Wisdom's wand;  
 Like those thou temperest 'mid the rills  
 Descending from thy native hills.  
 Without his governance, in vain  
 Manhood is strong, and youth is bold. 20  
 If oftentimes the o'er-piled strain  
 Clogs in the furnace, and grows cold,  
 Beneath his pinions deep and frore,  
 And swells, and melts, and flows no more,  
 That is because the heat beneath, 25  
 Pants in its cavern poorly fed.  
 Life springs not from the couch of Death,  
 Nor Muse nor Grace can raise the dead;  
 Unturn'd then let the mass remain,  
 Intractable to sun or rain. 30  
 A marsh, where only flat leaves lie,  
 And showing but the broken sky,  
 Too surely is the sweetest lay  
 That wins the ear and wastes the day;  
 Where youthful Fancy pouts alone, 35  
 And lets not Wisdom touch her zone.  
 He who would build his fame up high,  
 The rule and plummet must apply,  
 Nor say—I'll do what I have plann'd,  
 Before he try if loam or sand 40  
 Be still remaining in the place  
 Delved for each polish'd pillar's base.  
 With skilful eye and fit device,  
 Thou raisest every edifice:  
 Whether in sheltered vale it stand 45  
 Or overlook the Dardan strand,



Amid those cypresses that mourn  
Laodamia's love forlorn.

We both have run o'er half the space  
Bounded for mortals' earthly race ; 50  
We both have crossed life's fervid line,  
And other stars before us shine.  
May they be bright and prosperous  
As those that have been stars for us!  
Our course by Milton's light was sped, 55  
And Shakspeare shining overhead:  
Chatting on deck was Dryden too,  
The Bacon of the rhyming crew ;  
None ever crost our mystic sea,  
More richly stored with thought than he ; 60  
Tho' never tender nor sublime,  
He struggles with and conquers Time.  
To learn my lore on Chaucer's knee,  
I've left much prouder company.  
Thee, gentle Spenser fondly led ; 65  
But me he mostly sent to bed.

I wish them every joy above  
That highly blessed spirits prove,  
Save one—and that too shall be theirs,  
But after many rolling years, 70  
When 'mid their light, thy light appears.

# TO SOUTHEY

*Works* (1846)

THERE are who teach us that the depths of thought  
Engulph the poet ; that irregular  
Is every greater one. Go, Southey! mount  
Up to these teachers ; ask, submissively,  
Who so proportioned as the lord of day ? 5  
Yet mortals see his stedfast stately course  
And lower their eyes before him. Fools gaze up

Amazed at daring flights. Does Homer soar  
 As hawks and kites and weaker swallows do?  
 He knows the swineherd; he plants apple-trees 10  
 Amid Alcinous's cypresses;  
 He covers with his aged black-vein'd hand  
 The plummy crest that frighten'd and made cling  
 To its fond-mother the ill-fated child;  
 He walks along Olympus with the Gods, 15  
 Complacently and calmly, as along  
 The sands where Simöis glides into the sea.  
 They who step high and swing their arms, soon tire.  
*The glorious Theban then?*

The sage from Thebes,  
 Who sang his wisdom when the strife of cars 20  
 And combatants had paus'd, deserves more praise  
 Than this untrue one, fitter for the weak,  
 Who by the lightest breezes are borne up  
 And with the dust and straws are swept away;  
 Who fancy they are carried far aloft 25  
 When nothing quite distinctly they descry,  
 Having lost all self-guidance. But strong men  
 Are strongest with their feet upon the ground.  
 Light-bodied Fancy, Fancy plover-winged,  
 Draws some away from culture to dry downs 30  
 Where none but insects find their nutriment;  
 There let us leave them to their sleep and dreams.

Great is that poet, great is he alone,  
 Who rises o'er the creatures of the earth,  
 Yet only where his eye may well discern 35  
 The various movements of the human heart,  
 And how each mortal differs from the rest.  
 Although he struggle hard with Poverty.  
 He dares assert his just prerogative  
 To stand above all perishable things, 40  
 Proclaiming *this* shall live, and *this* shall die.

## ON SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON

## i

*Examiner* (1838)

IN poetry there is but one Supreme,  
 Though there are many angels round his throne,  
 Mighty, and beauteous . . . while his face is hid.

## ii

*Works* (1846)

HE lighted with his golden lamp on high  
 The unknown regions of the human heart,  
 Show'd its bright fountains, show'd its rueful wastes,  
 Its shoals and headlands; and a tower he rais'd  
 Refulgent, where eternal breakers roll, 5  
 For all to see, but no man to approach.

iii. *To The River Avon**Letters* (1897)

AVON! why runnest thou away so fast?  
 Rest thee before that Chancel where repose  
 The bones of him whose spirit moves the world.  
 I have beheld thy birthplace, I have seen  
 Thy tiny ripples where they played amid 5  
 The golden cups and ever-waving blades.  
 I have seen mighty rivers, I have seen  
 Padus, recovered from his fiery wound,  
 And Tiber, prouder than them all to bear  
 Upon his tawny bosom men who crusht 10  
 The world they trod on, heeding not the cries  
 Of culprit kings and nations many-tongued.  
 What are to me these rivers, once adorn'd  
 With crowns they would not wear but swept away?  
 Worthier art thou of worship, and I bend 15  
 My knees upon thy bank, and call thy name,  
 And hear, or think I hear, thy voice reply.

## iv, v

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

## iv

WITH frowning brow o'er pontif-kings elate,  
 Stood Dante, great the man, the poet great.  
 Milton in might and majesty surpast  
 The triple world, and far his shade was cast.  
 On earth he sang amid the Angelic host, 5  
 And Paradise to him was never lost.  
 But there was one who came these two between  
 With larger light than yet our globe had seen.  
 Various were his creations, various speech  
 Without a Babel he bestow'd on each. 10  
 Raleigh and Bacon towered above that earth  
 Which in their day had given our Shakespeare birth,  
 And neither knew his presence! they half-blind  
 Saw not in him the grandest of mankind.

## v

THAT critic must indeed be bold  
 Who pits new authors against old.  
 Only the ancient coin is prized,  
 The dead alone are canonized:  
 What was even Shakespeare until then? 5  
 A poet scarce compared with Ben:  
 And Milton in the streets no taller  
 Than sparkling easy-ambling Waller.  
 Waller now walks with rhyming crowds,  
 While Milton sits above the clouds, 10  
 Above the stars, his fixt abode,  
 And points to men their way to God.

## ON SOUTHEY

i

1833. *Athenaeum* (1834)

I

INDWELLER of a peaceful vale,  
 Ravaged, erewhile, by white-hair'd Dane;  
 Proud architect of many a wondrous tale,  
 Which, till Helvellyn's head lie prostrate, shall remain!

II

From Arno's side I hear thy Derwent flow, 5  
 And see, methinks, the lake below  
 Reflect thy graceful progeny, more fair  
 And radiant than the purest waters are,  
 Even when gurgling, in their joy, among  
     The bright and blessed throng, 10  
     Whom—on her arm recline,  
     The beauteous Proserpine  
 With tenderest, regretful gaze,  
 Thinking of Enna's yellow field, surveys.

III

Alas! that snows are shed 15  
 Upon thy laurell'd head,  
 Hurtled by many cares and many wrongs!  
     Malignity lets none  
     Reach safe the Delphic throne;  
 A hundred kennel curs bark down Fame's hundred tongues.

IV

But this is in the night; when men are slow 21  
 To raise their eyes; when high and low,  
 The scarlet and the colourless are one:  
     Soon Sleep unbars his noiseless prison,  
     And active minds again are risen; 25  
 Where are the curs?—dream-bound and whimpering in the  
     sun.

## V

At fife's, or lyre's, or tabor's sound,  
 The dance of youth, Oh! Southey runs not round,  
 But ceases at the bottom of—the room,  
 Amid the falling dust and deepening gloom; 30  
     Where the weary sit them down,  
 And beauty too unbraids and waits a lovelier crown.

## VI

We hurry to the river we must cross,  
     And swifter downward every footstep wends;  
 Happy, who reach it 'ere they count the loss 35  
     Of half their faculties and half their friends!  
     When we have come to it, the stream  
     Is not so dreary as They dream  
     Who look on it from haunts too dear;  
 The weak from Pleasure's baths feel most its chilling air! 40

## VII

No firmer breast than thine hath Heaven  
     To poet, sage, or hero given;  
 No breast more tender; none more just  
     To that He largely placed in trust:  
 Therefore shalt Thou, whate'er the date 45  
 Of years be thine, with soul elate  
 Rise up before the Eternal throne,  
 And hear, in God's own voice, 'Well done.'

## VIII

Not—were that submarine  
     Gem-lighted city mine,  
 In which my name, engraven by Thy hand  
 Above the royal gleam of blazonry shall stand,  
     Not—were all Syracuse

Poured forth before my Muse,  
 With Hiero's cars, and steeds, and Pindar's lyre, 55  
 Brightening the path with more than Solar fire;  
 Could I—as would beseem—requite the praise  
 Showered upon my low head from Thy most lofty lays.

## ii

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree (1853)*

It was a dream (ah! what is not a dream?)  
 In which I wander'd thro a boundless space  
 Peopled by those that peopled earth erewhile.  
 But who conducted me? That gentle Power,  
 Gentle as Death, Death's brother. On his brow 5  
 Some have seen poppies; and perhaps among  
 The many flowers about his wavy curls  
 Poppies there might be; roses I am sure  
 I saw, and dimmer amaranths between.  
 Lightly I thought I lept across a grave 10  
 Smelling of cool fresh turf, and sweet it smelt.  
 I would, but must not linger; I must on,  
 To tell my dream before forgetfulness  
 Sweeps it away, or breaks or changes it.  
 I was among the Shades (if Shades they were) 15  
 And lookt around me for some friendly hand  
 To guide me on my way, and tell me all  
 That compast me around. I wisht to find  
 One no less firm or ready than the guide  
 Of Alighieri, trustier far than he, 20  
 Higher in intellect, more conversant  
 With earth and heaven and whatso lies between.  
 He stood before me . . Southey.  
 'Thou art he,'  
 Said I, 'whom I was wishing.'  
 'That I know,'  
 Replied the genial voice and radiant eye. 25

'We may be question'd, question we may not;  
 For that might cause to bubble forth again  
 Some bitter spring which crost the pleasantest  
 And shadiest of our paths.'

'I do not ask'

Said I, 'about your happiness; I see 30  
 The same serenity as when we walkt  
 Along the downs of Clifton. Fifty years  
 Have roll'd behind us since that summer-tide,  
 Nor thirty fewer since along the lake  
 Of Lario, to Bellaggio villa-crown'd, 35  
 Thro the crisp waves I urged my sideling bark,  
 Amid sweet salutation off the shore  
 From lordly Milan's proudly courteous dames.'  
 'Landor! I well remember it,' said he,  
 'I had just lost my first-born only boy, 40  
 And then the heart is tender; lightest things  
 Sink into it, and dwell there evermore.'

The words were not yet spoken when the air  
 Blew balmier; and around the parent's neck  
 An Angel threw his arms: it was that son. 45  
 'Father! I felt you wisht me,' said the boy,  
 'Behold me here!'

Gentle the sire's embrace,  
 Gentle his tone. 'See here your father's friend!'  
 He gazed into my face, then meekly said  
 'He whom my father loves hath his reward 50  
 On earth; a richer one awaits him here.'





Here, take my word, 'tis neither shame nor sin  
 To venture boldly, all thy own thrown in, 20  
 With purest incense to the Eternal Mind.  
 That spacious urn, his heart, lights half mankind.  
 Batter it, bruize it, blacken it at will,  
 It hath its weight and precious substance still.  
 We, who love order, yield our betters place 25  
 With duteous zeal, and, if we can, with grace.  
*Roderick, Kehama, Thalaba*, belong  
 To mightier movers of majestick song.  
 To such as these we give, by just controul,  
 Not our five shillings, but our heart and soul. 30

### iii. *Malvolio*

J. Ablett, *Literary Hours* (1837)

THOU hast been very tender to the Moon,  
 Malvolio! and on many a daffodil  
 And many a daisy hast thou yearn'd, until  
 The nether jaw quivered with thy good heart.  
 But tell me now, Malvolio, tell me true, 5  
 Hast thou not sometimes driven from their play  
 The village children, when they came too near  
 Thy study, if hit ball rais'd shouts around,  
 Or if delusive trap shook off thy Muse  
 Pregnant with wonders for another age? 10  
 Hast thou sat still and patient (tho' sore prest  
 Hearthward to stoop and warm thy blue-nailed hand)  
 Lest thou shouldst frighten from a frosty fare  
 The speckled thrush, raising his bill aloft  
 To swallow the red berry on the ash 15  
 By thy white window, three short paces off?  
 If *this* thou hast not done, and hast done *that*,  
 I do exile thee from the Moon twelve whole

Calendar months, debarring thee from use  
 Of rose . . . bud, blossom, odour, simily . . . 20  
 And furthermore I do hereby pronounce  
 Divorce between the nightingale and thee.

## ON SHELLEY AND KEATS

## i

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

SHELLEY! whose song so sweet was sweetest here,  
 We knew each other little; now I walk  
 Along the same green path, along the shore  
 Of Lerici, along the sandy plain  
 Trending from Lucca to the Pisan pines, 5  
 Under whose shadow scatter'd camels lie,  
 The old and young, and rarer deer uplift  
 Their knotty branches o'er high-feather'd fern.  
 Regions of happiness! I greet ye well;  
 Your solitudes, and not your cities, stay'd 10  
 My steps among you; for with you alone  
 Converst I, and with those ye bore of old.  
 He who beholds the skies of Italy  
 Sees ancient Rome reflected, sees beyond,  
 Into more glorious Hellas, nurse of Gods 15  
 And godlike men: dwarfs people other lands.  
 Frown not, maternal England! thy weak child  
 Kneels at thy feet and owns in shame a lie.

## ii, iii

*Heroic Idyls* (1863)

## ii

THOU hast not lost all glory, Rome!  
 With thee have found their quiet home  
 Two whom we followers most admire  
 Of those that swell our sacred quire;  
 And many a lowered voice repeats 5  
 Hush! here lies Shelley! here lies Keats!

SHELLEY and Keats, on earth unknown  
 One to the other, now are gone  
 Where only such pure Spirits meet  
 And sing before them words as sweet.

## ON CHARLES LAMB

## i

1835. J. Ablett, *Literary Hours* (1837)

ONCE, and once only, have I seen thy face,  
 Elia! once only has thy tripping tongue  
 Run o'er my heart, yet never has been left  
 Impression on it stronger or more sweet.

## ii

*Leigh Hunt's London Journal* (1835)

COMFORT thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile!  
 Again shall Elia's smile  
 Refresh thy heart, when heart can ache no more.  
 What is it we deplore?  
 He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,      5  
 Far worthier things than tears:  
 The love of friends without a single foe,  
 Unequall'd lot below!  
 His gentle soul, his genius, these are thine;  
 Shalt thou for those repine?      10  
 He may have left the lowly walks of men.  
 Left them he has. What then?  
 Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes  
 Of all the good and wise?  
 Tho' the warm day is over, yet they seek      15  
 Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows  
 O'er Death's perennial snows.  
 Behold him! From the spirits of the Blest  
 He speaks, he bids thee rest.

20

## TO JOHN FORSTER

i. *A Mask on a Ring**Works* (1846)

FORSTER! you who never wore  
 Any kind of mask before;  
 Yet, by holy friendship! take  
 This, and wear it for my sake.

## ii

*Works* (1846)

FORSTER! whose zeal hath seiz'd each written page  
 That fell from me, and over many lands  
 Hath clear'd for me a broad and solid way,  
 Whence one more age, aye, haply more than one,  
 May be arrived at (all through thee), accept 5  
 No false or faint or perishable thanks.  
 From better men, and greater, friendship turn'd  
 Thy willing steps to me. From Eliot's cell  
 Death-dark; from Hampden's sadder battle-field;  
 From steadfast Cromwell's tribunitian throne, 10  
 Loftier than kings' supported knees could mount;  
 Hast thou departed with me, and hast climbed  
 Cecropian highths, and ploughed Ægean waves.  
 Therefore it never grieved me when I saw  
 That she who guards those regions and those seas 15  
 Hath lookt with eyes more gracious upon thee.  
 There are no few like that conspirator  
 Who, under pretext of power-worship, fell  
 At Cæsar's feet, only to hold him down

While others stabb'd him with repeated blows: 20  
 And there are more who fling light jibes, immerst  
 In gutter-filth, against the car that mounts  
 Weighty with triumph up the Sacred Way.  
 Protect in every place my stranger guests,  
 Born in the lucid land of free pure song, 25  
 Now first appearing on repulsive shores,  
 Bleak, and where safely none but natives move,  
 Red-poll'd, red-handed, siller-grasping men.  
 Ah! lead them far away, for they are used  
 To genial climes and gentle speech; but most 30  
 Cymodameia: warn the Tritons off  
 While she ascends, while through the opening plain  
 Of the green sea (brighten'd by bearing it)  
 Gushes redundantly her golden hair.

## ON THOMAS HOOD

*Confession of Jealousy**Heroic Idyls* (1863)

JEALOUS, I own it, I was once,  
 That wickedness I here renounce.  
 I tried at wit . . . it would not do . . .  
 At tenderness . . . that fail'd me too,  
 Before me on each path there stood 5  
 The witty and the tender Hood.

## TO ROBERT BROWNING

*Morning Chronicle* (1845)

THERE is delight in singing, though none hear  
 Beside the singer; and there is delight  
 In praising, though the praiser sit alone  
 And see the prais'd far off him, far above.  
 Shakspeare is not *our* poet, but the world's, 5

Therefore on him no speech ; and short for thee,  
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,  
No man hath walk'd along our roads with step  
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue  
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes 10  
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing ; the breeze  
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on  
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where  
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

# LEOFRIC AND GODIVA

*Imaginary Conversations* (1829)

*Godiva.* There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers <sup>10</sup> and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odour. <sup>20</sup>

*Leofric.* And now, Godiva my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

*Godiva.* Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage: they, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.



*Leofric.* O light laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straight-way to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

*Godiva.* I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish? what he can do like God.

*Leofric.* How! what is it?

10 *Godiva.* I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

*Leofric.* Unhappy! is that all?

*Godiva.* Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! shall none enjoy them? not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words; they  
20 are better than mine; should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

*Leofric.* Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

*Godiva.* They have then drawn the sword against you! Indeed I knew it not.

*Leofric.* They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

3 *Godiva.* If they were starving, as they said they were . . .

30 *Leofric.* Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

*Godiva.* Enough! O God! too much! too much! may you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric,

Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst . . and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul! for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family.

*Leofric.* We must hold solemn festivals.

*Godiva.* We must indeed.

*Leofric.* Well then.

*Godiva.* Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of 10  
God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? are maddening songs and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-coloured coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is 20  
gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again, to him who pours it out here unsparingly.

*Leofric.* Thou art wild.

30

*Godiva.* I have indeed lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O, my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

*Leofric.* We may think upon it.

*Godiva.* Never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

*Leofric.* Here comes the bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no 'bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honour and rank among men are humbled by this: Earl Godwin will hear of it: up! up! the  
10 bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward: dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

*Godiva.* Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious tax, this tax on hard labour, on hard life.

*Leofric.* Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages . . . Up! up!  
20 for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

*Godiva.* My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

*Leofric.* Sir bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets.

*Godiva.* O my dear cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me! It was not so! can mine have hardened it?

30 *Bishop.* Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

*Godiva.* Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my lord's cruel word?

*Bishop.* I did, lady.

*Godiva.* Will you remember it, and pray against it?

*Bishop.* Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter?

*Godiva.* I am not offended.

*Bishop.* Angel of peace and purity!

*Godiva.* But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And now what was it?

*Bishop.* Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

*Godiva.* Did he not swear an oath? 10

*Bishop.* He sware by the holy rood.

*Godiva.* My Redeemer! thou hast heard it! save the city!

*Leofric.* We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs: let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward: to-morrow we shall rest.

*Godiva.* No judgments then to-morrow, Leofric?

*Leofric.* None: we will carouse.

*Godiva.* The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence: my prayers are heard: the heart of my beloved 20 is now softened.

*Leofric (aside).* Ay, ay . . they shall smart, though.

*Godiva.* Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

*Leofric.* I have sworn: beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime.

*Godiva.* I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

*Leofric.* But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing; 30 there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair: take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it minglenth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if

it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beautiful Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown or wonderment . . . I *will* say it . . . now then for worse . . . I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and loving eyes, before the  
10 people.

*Godiva.* To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

*Leofric.* I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

*Godiva (to herself).* God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten! and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach! and  
20 how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me! Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah, when will the morning come! ah, when will the noon be over!

*Note by Landor*

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the *square pool* at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence,  
30 he began to scoff at the subject; and on his reaching the last line his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entreated and implored my friend *not to tell the lads*; so heart-strickenly and desperately was I

ashamed. The verses are these, if any one else should wish another laugh at me:—

In every hour, in every mood,  
O lady, it is sweet and good  
To bathe the soul in prayer;  
And at the close of such a day.  
When we have ceased to bless and pray,  
To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place!

## ROGER ASCHAM AND LADY JANE GREY

*Imaginary Conversations* (1824)

*Ascham.* Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state; thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it: submit in thankfulness.

Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a high degree, is inspired by honour in a higher: it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection but in the most exalted minds. Alas! alas!

*Jane.* What aileth my virtuous Ascham? what is amiss? why do I tremble?

20

*Ascham.* I remember a sort of prophecy, made three years ago: it is a prophecy of thy condition and of my feelings on it. Recoldest thou who wrote, sitting upon the sea-beach the evening after an excursion to the Isle of Wight, these verses?

Invisibly bright water! so like air,  
On looking down I feared thou couldst not bear  
My little bark, of all light barks most light,  
And look'd again, and drew me from the sight,  
And, hanging back, breath'd each fresh gale aghast,  
And held the bench, not to go on so fast.

30

*Jane.* I was very childish when I composed them; and, if I had thought any more about the matter, I should have hoped you had been too generous to keep them in your memory as witnesses against me.

*Ascham.* Nay, they are not much amiss for so young a girl, and there being so few of them, I did not reprove thee. Half an hour, I thought, might have been spent more unprofitably; and I now shall believe it firmly, if thou wilt but be led by them to meditate a little on the similarity  
 10 of situation in which thou then wert to what thou art now in.

*Jane.* I will do it, and whatever else you command; for I am weak by nature and very timorous, unless where a strong sense of duty holdeth and supporteth me. There God acteth, and not his creature.

Those were with me at sea who would have been attentive to me if I had seemed to be afraid, even though worshipful men and women were in the company; so that something more powerful threw my fear overboard. Yet I never will  
 20 go again upon the water.

*Ascham.* Exercise that beauteous couple, that mind and body, much and variously, but at home, at home, Jane! indoors, and about things indoors; for God is there too. We have rocks and quicksands on the banks of our Thames, O lady, such as Ocean never heard of; and many (who knows how soon!) may be engulfed in the current under their garden-walls.

*Jane.* Thoroughly do I now understand you. Yes indeed, I have read evil things of courts; but I think nobody can go  
 30 out bad who entereth good, if timely and true warning shall have been given.

*Ascham.* I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, albeit thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blinded thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omnipotence; but it is because thy tender heart,

having always leant affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil.

I once persuaded thee to reflect much: let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflection, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and stedfastly on what is under and before thee.

*Jane.* I have well bethought me of my duties: O how extensive they are! what a goodly and fair inheritance! But tell me, would you command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Plutarch and Polybius? The 10 others I do resign: they are good for the arbour and for the gravel-walk: yet leave unto me, I beseech you, my friend and father, leave unto me for my fireside and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

*Ascham.* Read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are the men for men: these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband. 20

*Jane.* I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection; I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget at times, unworthy supplicant! the prayers I should have offered for myself. Never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband in the most trying duties.

*Ascham.* Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous: but time will harden him: time must harden even thee, sweet Jane! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition. 30

*Jane.* He is contented with me and with home.

*Ascham.* Ah Jane! Jane! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

*Jane.* He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him: I will read them to him every evening: I will open



new worlds to him richer than those discovered by the Spaniard: I will conduct him to treasures, O what treasures! on which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

*Ascham.* Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented; but watch him well; sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart  
10 by the music of thy discourse.

Teach him to live unto God and unto thee; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.

## LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

### *Imaginary Conversations (1824)*

*Brooke.* I come again unto the woods and unto the wilds of Penshurst, whither my heart and the friend of my heart have long invited me.

*Sidney.* Welcome, welcome! How delightful it is to see a friend after a length of absence! How delightful to chide him for that length of absence, to which we owe such  
20 delight.

*Brooke.* I know not whether our names will be immortal; I am sure our friendship will. For names sound only upon the surface of the earth, while friendships are the purer, and the more ardent, the nearer they come to the presence of God, the sun not only of righteousness but of love. Ours never has been chipt or dimmed even here, and never shall be.

*Sidney.* Let me take up your metaphor. Friendship is a vase which, when it is flawed by heat or violence or accident,  
30 may as well be broken at once; it can never be trusted after. The more graceful and ornamental it was, the more

clearly do we discern the hopelessness of restoring it to its former state. Coarse stones, if they are fractured, may be cemented again; precious ones never. And now, Greville, seat yourself under this oak; since, if you had hungered or thirsted from your journey, you would have renewed the alacrity of your old servants in the hall.

*Brooke.* In truth I did; for no otherwise the good household would have it. The birds met me first, affrightened by the tossing up of caps; and by these harbingers I knew who were coming. When my palfrey eyed them askance for 10 their clamorousness, and shrank somewhat back, they quarrelled with him almost before they saluted me, and asked him many pert questions. What a pleasant spot, Sidney, have you chosen here for meditation! a solitude is the audience-chamber of God. Few days in our year are like this: there is a fresh pleasure in every fresh posture of the limbs, in every turn the eye takes.

Youth! credulous of happiness, throw down  
Upon this turf thy wallet, stored and swoln  
With morrow-morns, bird-eggs, and bladders burst, 20  
That tires thee with its wagging to and fro:  
Thou too wouldst breathe more freely for it, Age!  
Who lackest heart to laugh at life's deceit.

It sometimes requires a stout push, and sometimes a sudden resistance, in the wisest men, not to become for a moment the most foolish. What have I done? I have fairly challenged you, so much my master.

*Sidney.* You have warmed me: I must cool a little and watch my opportunity. So now, Greville, return you to your invitations, and I will clear the ground for the com- 30 pany; for Youth, for Age, and whatever comes between, with kindred and dependencies. Verily we need no taunts like those in your verses: here we have few vices, and consequently few repinings. I take especial care that my young labourers and farmers shall never be idle, and I

supply them with bows and arrows, with bowls and ninepins, for their Sunday evening, lest they drink and quarrel. In church they are taught to love God; after church they are practised to love their neighbour; for business on work-days keeps them apart and scattered, and on market-days they are prone to a rivalry bordering on malice, as competitors for custom. Goodness does not more certainly make men happy than happiness makes them good. We must distinguish between felicity and prosperity; for prosperity leads often to ambition, and ambition to disappointment: the course is then over; the wheel turns round but once; while the reaction of goodness and happiness is perpetual.

*Brooke.* You reason justly and you act rightly. Piety, warm, soft, and passive as the ether round the throne of Grace, is made callous and inactive by kneeling too much: her vitality faints under rigorous and wearisome observances. A forced match between a man and his religion sours his temper, and leaves a barren bed.

20 *Sidney.* Desire of lucre, the worst and most general country vice, arises here from the necessity of looking to small gains; it is, however, but the tartar that encrusts economy.

*Brooke.* I fear Avarice less from himself than from his associates, who fall upon a man the fiercest in old-age. Avarice (allow me to walk three paces further with Allegory) is more unlovely than mischievous, although one may say of him that he at last

30           Grudges the gamesome river-fish its food,  
          And shuts his heart against his own life's blood.

*Sidney.* We find but little of his handywork among the yeomanry, nor indeed much among those immediately above. The thriving squires are pricked and pinched by their eagerness to rival in expenditure those of somewhat

better estate; for, as vanity is selfishness, the vain are usually avaricious, and they who throw away most, exact most. Penurious men are oftener just than spendthrifts.

*Brooke.* Oh that anything so monstrous should exist in this profusion and prodigality of blessings! The herbs, elastic with health, seem to partake of sensitive and animated life, and to feel under my hand the benediction I would bestow on them. What a hum of satisfaction in God's creatures! How is it, Sidney, the smallest do seem the happiest?

10

*Sidney.* Compensation for their weaknesses and their fears; compensation for the shortness of their existence. Their spirits mount upon the sunbeam above the eagle; and they have more enjoyment in their one summer than the elephant in his century.

*Brooke.* Are not also the little and lowly in our species the most happy?

*Sidney.* I would not willingly try nor overcuriously examine it. We, Greville, are happy in these parks and forests: we were happy in my close winter-walk of box and 20 laurustine. In our earlier days did we not emboss our bosoms with the daffodils, and shake them almost unto shedding with our transport? Ay, my friend, there is a greater difference, both in the stages of life and in the seasons of the year, than in the conditions of men: yet the healthy pass through the seasons, from the clement to the inclement, not only \*unreluctantly but rejoicingly, knowing that the worst will soon finish, and the best begin anew; and we are desirous of pushing forward into every stage of life, excepting that alone which ought reasonably to allure us most, as opening 30 to us the *Via Sacra*, along which we move in triumph to our eternal country. We labour to get through the moments of our life, as we would to get through a crowd. Such is our impatience, such our hatred of procrastination, in everything but the amendment of our practices and the

adornment of our nature, one would imagine we were dragging Time along by force, and not he us. We may in some measure frame our minds for the reception of happiness, for more or for less; we should however well consider to what port we are steering in search of it, and that even in the richest its quantity is but too exhaustible. It is easier to alter the modes and qualities of it, than to increase its stores. There is a sickliness in the firmest of us, which induceth us to change our side, though reposing ever so  
 10 softly; yet, wittingly or unwittingly, we turn again soon into our old position. Afterward, when we have fixed, as we imagine, on the object most desirable, we start extravagantly; and, blinded by the rapidity of our course toward the treasure we would seize and dwell with, we find another hand upon the lock—the hand of one standing in the shade—Death!

*Brooke.* There is often a sensibility in poets which precipitates 'em hither.

The winged head of Genius snakes surround,  
 20 As erstwhile poor Medusa's.

We however have defences against the shafts of the vulgar, and such as no position could give.

*Sidney.* God hath granted unto both of us hearts easily contented, hearts fitted for every station, because fitted for every duty. What appears the dullest may contribute most to our genius: what is most gloomy may soften the seeds and relax the fibres of gaiety. We enjoy the solemnity of the spreading oak above us: perhaps we owe to it in part the mood of our minds at this instant: perhaps an inanimate  
 30 thing supplies me, while I am speaking, with whatever I possess of animation. Do you imagine that any contest of shepherds can afford them the same pleasure as I receive from the description of it; or that even in their loves, however innocent and faithful, they are so free from anxiety as I am while I celebrate them? The exertion of intellectual

power, of fancy and imagination, keeps from us greatly more than their wretchedness, and affords us greatly more than their enjoyment. We are motes in the midst of generations: we have our sunbeams to circuit and climb. Look at the summits of the trees around us, how they move, and the loftiest the most: nothing is at rest within the compass of our view, except the grey moss on the park-pales. Let it eat away the dead oak, but let it not be compared with the living one.

Poets are in general prone to melancholy; yet the most 10 plaintive ditty hath imparted a fuller joy, and of longer duration, to its composer, than the conquest of Persia to the Macedonian. A bottle of wine bringeth as much pleasure as the acquisition of a kingdom, and not unlike it in kind: the senses in both cases are confused and perverted.

*Brooke.* Merciful Heaven! and for the fruition of an hour's drunkenness, from which they must awaken with heaviness, pain, and terror, men consume a whole crop of their kind at one harvest-home. Shame upon those light ones who carol at the feast of blood! and worse upon those graver ones 20 who nail upon their escutcheon the name of great. Ambition is but Avarice on stilts and masked. God sometimes sends a famine, sometimes a pestilence, and sometimes a hero, for the chastisement of mankind; none of them surely for our admiration. Only some cause like unto that which is now scattering the mental fog of the Netherlands, and is preparing them for the fruits of freedom, can justify us in drawing the sword abroad.

*Sidney.* And only the accomplishment of our purpose can permit us again to sheathe it: for the aggrandisement 30 of our neighbour is nought of detriment to us; on the contrary, if we are honest and industrious, his wealth is ours. We have nothing to dread while our laws are equitable and our impositions light: but children fly from mothers who strip and scourge them.

*Brooke.*

Across the hearse where homebred Law lies dead  
Strides Despotism, and seems a bloated boy,  
Who, while some coarse clown drives him, thinks he drives,  
Shouting, with blear bluff face, *give way, give way!*

We are come to an age when we ought to read and speak plainly what our discretion tells us is fit: we are not to be set in a corner for mockery and derision, with our hands hanging down motionless, and our pockets turned inside-out.

- 10 *Sidney.* Let us congratulate our country on her freedom from debt, and on the economy and disinterestedness of her administrators; men altogether of eminent worth, afraid of nothing but of deviating from the broad and beaten path of illustrious ancestors, and propagating her glory in far-distant countries, not by the loquacity of mountebanks or the audacity of buffoons, nor by covering a tarnished sword-knot with a trim shoulder-knot, but by the mission of right learned, grave, and eloquent ambassadors. Triumphantly and disdainfully may you point to others.

- 20           While the young blossom starts to light,  
          And heaven looks down serenely bright  
          On Nature's graceful form;  
          While hills and vales and woods are gay,  
          And village voices all breathe May,  
          Who dreads the future storm?

- Where princes smile and senates bend,  
          What mortal e'er foresaw his end,  
          Or fear'd the frown of God?  
          Yet has the tempest swept them off,  
30           And the oppressed with bitter scoff  
          Their silent marble trod.

To swell their pride, to quench their ire,  
Did venerable Laws expire  
And sterner forms arise;  
Faith in their presence veiled her head,  
Patience and Charity were dead,  
And Hope beyond the skies.

But away, away with politics: let not this city-stench infect our fresh country-air.

*Brooke.* To happiness then, and unhappiness too, since we can discourse upon it without emotion. I know not, Philip, how it is, but certainly I have never been more tired with any reading than with dissertations upon happiness, which seems not only to elude inquiry, but to cast unmerciful loads of clay and sand and husks and stubble along the high road of the inquirer. Theologians and moralists, and even sound philosophers, talk mostly in a drawling 10 and dreaming way about it. He who said that virtue alone is happiness, would have spoken more truly in saying that virtue alone is misery, if *alone* means *singly*; for, beyond a doubt, the virtuous man meets with more opposites and opponents than any other, meets with more whose interests and views thwart his, and whose animosities are excited against him, not only by the phantom of interest, but by envy. Virtue alone cannot rebuff them; nor can the virtuous man, if only virtuous, live under them, I will not say contentedly and happily, I will say, at all. Self-esteem, we 20 hear, is the gift of virtue, the golden bough at which the gates of Elysium fly open: but, alas! it is oftener, I am afraid, the portion of the strong-minded, and even of the vain, than of the virtuous. By the constant exertion of our best energies, we can keep down many of the thorns along the path of life; yet some will thwart us, whether we carry our book with us or walk without it, whether we cast our eyes on earth or on heaven. He who hath given the best definition of most things, hath given but an imperfect one here, informing us that a happy life is one without impedi- 30 ment to virtue. A happy life is not made up of negatives. Exemption from one thing is not possession of another. Had I been among his hearers, and could have uttered my sentiments in the presence of so mighty a master, I would have told him that the definition is still unfound, like the thing.



A sound mind and sound body, which many think all-sufficient, are but receptacles for it. Happiness, like air and water, the other two great requisites of life, is composite. One kind of it suits one man, another kind another. The elevated mind takes in and breathes out again that which would be uncongenial to the baser, and the baser draws life and enjoyment from that which would be putridity to the loftier. Wise or unwise, who doubts for a moment that contentment is the cause of happiness? Yet the  
 10 inverse is true: we are contented because we are happy, and not happy because we are contented. Well-regulated minds may be satisfied with a small portion of happiness; none can be happy with a small portion of content. In fact, hardly anything which we receive for truth, is really and entirely so, let it appear as plain as it may, and let its appeal be not only to the understanding, but to the senses; for our words do not follow them exactly; and it is by words we receive truth and express it.

I do not wonder that in the cloud of opinions and of  
 20 passions (for where there are many of the one, there are usually some of the other) the clearer view of this subject should be intercepted: rather is it to be marvelled at, that no plain reasoning creature should in his privacy have argued thus:

'I am without the things which do not render those who possess them happier than I am: but I have those the absence of which would render me unhappy; and therefore the having of them should, if my heart is a sound one and my reason unperverted, render me content and blest! I  
 30 have a house and garden of my own; I have competence; I have children. Take away any of these, and I should be sorrowful, I know not how long: give me any of those which are sought for with more avidity, and I doubt whether I should be happier twenty-four hours. He who has very much of his own, always has a project in readiness for some-

what of another's: he who has very little, has not even the ground on which to lay it. Thus one sharp angle of wickedness and disquietude is broken off from him.'

*Sidney.* Since we have entered into no contest or competition, which of us shall sing or sermonize the other fast asleep, and since we rather throw out than collect ideas on the subject of our conversation, do not accuse me of levity, I am certain you will not of irreligion, if I venture to say that comforts and advantages, in this life, appear at first sight to be distributed by some airy, fantastic Beings, such 10 as figure in the stories of the East. These generally choose a humpback slave or inconsiderate girl to protect and countenance: in like manner do we observe the ill-formed mind and instable character most immediately under the smiles of Fortune and the guidance of Prosperity; who, as the case is with lovers, are ardent and attached in proportion as they alight upon indifference and inconstancy.

*Brooke.* Yes, Happiness doats on her works, and is prodigal to her favourite. As one drop of water hath an attraction for another, so do felicities run into felicities. This 20 course is marked by the vulgar with nearly the same expression as I have employed upon it: men say habitually *a run of luck*. And I wish that misfortunes bore no resemblance to it in their march and tendency; but these also swarm and cluster and hang one from another, until at last some hard day deadens all sense in them, and terminates their existence.

*Sidney.* It must be acknowledged, our unhappiness appears to be more often sought by us, and pursued more steadily, than our happiness. What courtier on the one 30 side, what man of genius on the other, has not complained of unworthiness preferred to worth? Who prefers it? his friend? no: himself? no surely. Why then grieve at folly or injustice in those who have no concern in him, and in whom he has no concern? We are indignant at the

sufferings of those who bear bravely and undeservedly ; but a single cry from them breaks the charm that bound them to us.

The English character stands high above complaining. I have indeed heard the soldier of our enemy scream at receiving a wound ; I never heard ours. Shall the uneducated be worthy of setting an example to the lettered ? If we see, as we have seen, young persons of some promise, yet in comparison to us as the colt is to the courser, raised to  
 10 trust and eminence by a powerful advocate, is it not enough to feel ourselves the stronger men, without exposing our limbs to the passenger, and begging him in proof to handle our muscles ? Those who distribute offices are sometimes glad to have the excuse of merit ; but never give them for it. Only one subject of sorrow, none of complaint, in respect to court, is just and reasonable ; namely, to be rejected or overlooked when our exertions or experience might benefit our country. Forbidden to unite our glory with hers, let us cherish it at home the more fondly for its disappointment,  
 20 and give her reason to say afterward, she could have wished the union. He who complains deserves what he complains of.

Religions, languages, races of men, rise up, flourish, decay ; and just in the order I assign to them. O my friend ! is it nothing to think that this hand of mine, over which an insect is creeping, and upon which another more loathsome one ere long will pasture, may hold forth to my fellow men, by resolution of heart in me and perseverance, those things which shall outlive the least perishable in the whole dominion  
 of mortality ? Creatures, of whom the best and weightiest  
 30 part are the feathers in their caps, and of whom the lightest are their words and actions, curl their whiskers and their lips in scorn upon similar meditations.

Let us indulge in them ; they are neither weak nor idle, having been suckled by Wisdom and taught to walk by Virtue. We have never thrown away the keepsakes that

Nature has given us, nor bartered them for toys easily broken in the public paths of life.

*Brooke.* Argue then no longer about courts and discontents: I would rather hear a few more verses; for a small draught increases the thirst of the thirsty.

*Sidney.* To write as the ancients have written, without borrowing a thought or expression from them, is the most difficult thing we can achieve in poetry. I attempt no composition which I foresee will occupy more than an hour or two, so that I can hardly claim any rank among the poets; 10 yet having once collected, in my curiosity, all the *Invocations to Sleep*, ancient and modern, I fancied it possible to compose one very differently; which, if you consider the simplicity of the subject and the number of those who have treated it, may appear no easy matter.

Sleep! who contractest the waste realms of Night,  
None like the wretched can extol thy powers:  
We think of thee when thou art far away,  
We hold thee dearer than the light of day,  
And most when Love forsakes us wish thee ours: 20  
O hither bend thy flight!

Silent and welcome as the blessed shade  
Alcestris to the dark Thessalian hall,  
When Hercules and Death and Hell obey'd  
Her husband's desolate despondent call.

What fiend would persecute thee, gentle Sleep,  
Or beckon thee aside from man's distress?  
Needless it were to warn thee of the stings  
That pierce my pillow, now those waxen wings 30  
Which bore me to the sun of happiness,  
Have dropt into the deep.

*Brooke.* If I cannot compliment you, as I lately complimented a poet on the same subject, by saying, *May all the gods and goddesses be as propitious to your Invocation*, let me at least congratulate you that everything here is fiction.

*Sidney.* There are sensible men who would call me to an account for attempting to keep up with the ancients, and then running downhill among the moderns, and more especially for expatiating in the regions of Romance. The fastidious and rigid call it bad taste: and I am afraid they have Truth for their prompter. But this, I begin to suspect, is rather from my deficiency of power and judgment, than because the thing in itself is wrong. Chivalry in the beginning was often intemperate and inhumane: afterward the  
 10 term became synonymous with valorous courtesy. Writers, and the Public after them, now turn it into ridicule. But there is surely an incentive to noble actions in the deference we bear toward our ladies; and to carry it in my bosom is worth to me all the applauses I could ever receive from my prince. If the beloved keep us from them farther than arm's length for years together, much indeed we regret that our happiness is deferred, but more that theirs is. For pride, and what is better than pride, our pure conscience tells us, that God would bestow on us the glory of creating  
 20 it; of all terrestrial glory far the greatest.

*Brooke.* To those whose person and manners, and exalted genius, render them always and everywhere acceptable, it is pleasing to argue in this fashion.

*Sidney.* Greville! Greville! it is better to suffer than to lose the power of suffering. The perception of beauty, grace, and virtue, is not granted to all alike. There are more who are contented in an ignoble union on the flat beaten earth before us, than there are who, equally disregarding both unfavourable and favourable clamours, make for themselves  
 30 room to stand on an elevated and sharp-pointed summit, and thence to watch the motions and scintillations, and occasional overcloudings, of some bright distant star. Is it nothing to have been taught, apart from the vulgar, those graceful submissions which afford us a legitimate pride when we render them to the worthy? Is there no privilege

in electing our own sovereign? no pleasure in bending heart and soul before her? I will never believe that age itself can arrest so vivid an emotion, or that his deathbed is hard or uneasy, who can bring before it even the empty image he has long (though in vain) adored. That life has not been spent idly which has been mainly spent in conciliating the generous affections, by such studies and pursuits as best furnish the mind for their reception. How many, who have abandoned for public life the studies of philosophy and poetry, may be compared to brooks and rivers, which in the 10 beginning of their course have assuaged our thirst, and have invited us to tranquillity by their bright resemblance of it, and which afterward partake the nature of that vast body whereinto they run, its dreariness, its bitterness, its foam, its storms, its everlasting noise and commotion! I have known several such; and when I have innocently smiled at them, their countenance seemed to say, 'I wish I could despise you: but alas! I am a runaway slave, and from the best of mistresses to the worst of masters; I serve at a tavern where every hour is dinner-time, and pick a 20 bone upon a silver dish.' And what is acquired by the more fortunate among them? they may put on a robe and use a designation which I have no right to: my cook and footman may do the same: one has a white apron, the other has red hose; I should be quite as much laughed at if I assumed them. A sense of inferior ability is painful: this I feel most at home: I could not do nearly so well what my domestics do; what the others do I could do better. My blushes are not at the superiority I have given myself, but at the comparison I must go through to 30 give it.

Two poets cannot walk or sit together easily while they have any poetry about them: they must turn it out upon the table or the grass or the rock or the road-side. I shall call on you presently; take all I have in the meanwhile.

# 108 LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

Afar behind is gusty March!  
 Again beneath a wider arch  
 The birds that fear'd grim winter fly:  
 O'er every pathway trip along  
 Light feet, more light with frolic song,  
 And eyes glance back, they know not why.

Say, who is that of leaf so rank,  
 Pushing the violet down the bank  
 With hearted spearhead glossy-green?  
 And why that changeface mural box  
 Points at the myrtle, whom he mocks,  
 Regardless what her cheer hath been?

10

The fennel waves her tender plume;  
 Mezereons, cloth'd with thick perfume,  
 And almonds urge the lagging leaf:  
 Ha! and so long then have I stood  
 And not observ'd thee, modest bud,  
 Wherefrom will rise their lawful chief!

20

O never say it, if perchance  
 Thou crown the cup or join the dance,  
 Neither in anger nor in sport;  
 For Pleasure then would pass me by,  
 The Graces look ungraciously,  
 Love frown, and drive me from his court.

*Brooke.* Considering the chances and changes of humanity, I wish I were as certain that Pleasure will never pass you by, as I am that the Graces will never look on you ungraciously.

*Sidney.* So little am I ashamed of the hours I spend in  
 30 poetry, even a consciousness that the poetry itself is bad  
 never leads me to think the occupation is. Foliage, herbage,  
 pebbles, may put in motion the finer parts of the mind; and  
 although the first things it throws off be verses, and in-  
 different ones, we are not to despise the cultivator of them,  
 but to consider him as possessing the garden of innocence,  
 at which the great body of mankind looks only through the  
 gate.

LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY 109

In the corner formed by the court-wall, sheltered and sunny, I found, earlier in the season than usual, a little rose-bud, which perhaps owed its existence to my cutting the plant in summer, when it began to intrude on the path, and had wetted the legs of the ladies with the rain it held. None but trifling poetry could be made out of this, yet other than trifling pleasure was.

*Brooke.* Philip, I can give you only spoiled flowers for unspoiled and unopened ones: will you accept them?

*Sidney.* Gladly.

10

*Brooke.* On what occasion and for whom my verses were composed, you may at once discover. Deem it enough for me to premise in elucidation, that women have no favour or mercy for the silence their charms impose on us. Little are they aware of the devotion we are offering to them, in that state whereinto the true lover is ever prone to fall, and which appears to them inattention, indifference, or moroseness. We must chirp before them eternally, or they will not moisten our beaks in our cages. They like praise best, we thanksgiving.

20

*Sidney.* Unfold the paper. What are you smiling at?

*Brooke.* The names of the speakers. I call one '*Poet*,' the other '*Lady*.' How questionably the former! how truly the latter! But judge.

*Poet.* Thus do you sit and break the flow'rs  
That might have lived a few short hours,  
And lived for you! Love, who o'erpowers

My youth and me,  
Shows me the petals idly shed,  
Shows me my hopes as early dead,  
In vain, in vain admonishèd

30

By all I see.

*Lady.* And thus you while the noon away,  
Watching me strip my flowers of gay  
Apparel, just put on for May,  
And soon laid by!



Can not you teach me one or two  
 Fine phrases? If you can, pray do,  
 Since *you* are grown too wise to woo,  
 To listen I.

*Poet.* Lady, I come not here to teach,  
 But learn, the moods of gentle speech;  
 Alas! too far beyond my reach

Are happier strains.

Many frail leaves shall yet lie pull'd,  
 Many frail hopes in death-bed lull'd,  
 Or ere this outcast heart be school'd  
 By all its pains.

*Sidney.* Let me hope that here is only

A volant shadow, just enough to break  
 The sleeping sunbeam of soft idleness.

*Brooke.* When a woman hath ceased to be quite the same  
 to us, it matters little how different she becomes.

*Sidney.* Hush! I will hear from you no sentiment but  
 your own, and this can never be yours. Variations there  
 20 are of temperature in the first season; and the truest heart  
 has not always the same pulsations. If we had nothing to  
 pardon or be pardoned, we might appear to be more perfect  
 than we are, but we should in fact be less so. Self-love is  
 ungenerous and unforgiving; love grieves and forgives.  
 Whatever there may be lying hid under those leaves and  
 blossoms shall rest there until our evening walk; we hav-  
 ing always chosen the calmest hours of the most beautiful  
 days for our discourses on love and religion. Something of  
 emotion, I cannot doubt, arose in your breast as you were  
 30 writing these simple lines; yet I am certain it was sweet  
 and solacing. Imagination should always be the confidant,  
 for she is always the calmer, of Passion, where Wisdom and  
 Virtue have an equally free admittance.

Let us now dismiss until evening comes (which is much  
 the best time for them) all these disquisitions, and let us  
 talk about absent friends.

## LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY III

*Brooke.* We must sit up late, if I am to tell you of all yours.

*Sidney.* While the weather is so temperate and genial, and while I can be out-of-doors, I care not how late I tarry among

Night airs that make tree-shadows walk, and sheep  
Washed white in the cold moonshine on gray cliffs.

Our last excess of this nature was nearer the sea, where, when our conversation paused awhile, in the stillness of mid-night we heard the distant wave break heavily. Their sound, you remarked, was such as you could imagine the sound of a giant might be, who, coming back from travel unto some smooth and still and solitary place, with all his armor and all his spoils about him, casts himself slumberously down to rest.

[Lord Brooke is less known than the personage with whom he converses, and upon whose friendship he had the virtue and good-sense to found his chief distinction. On his monument at Warwick, written by himself, we read that he was servant of Queen Elizabeth, counsellor of King James, and friend of Sir Philip Sidney. His style is stiff, but his sentiments are sound and manly. The same house produced another true patriot, slain in the civil wars by a shot from Lichfield minster. Clarendon, without any ground for his assertion, says there is reason to believe he would have abandoned his party and principles. The family is extant: a member of it was created Earl of Warwick by George II for services as Lord of the Bedchamber.] 20

## EDMUND SPENSER AND THE EARL OF ESSEX

*Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare (1834)*

*Essex.* Instantly on hearing of thy arrival from Ireland, I sent a message to thee, good Edmund, that I might learn from one so judicious and dispassionate as thou art, the real state of things in that distracted country; it having pleased the queen's majesty to think of appointing me her deputy, in order to bring the rebellious to submission. 30

*Spenser.* Wisely and well considered ; but more worthily of her judgment than her affection. May your lordship overcome, as you have ever done, the difficulties and dangers you foresee.

*Essex.* We grow weak by striking at random ; and knowing that I must strike, and strike heavily, I would fain see exactly where the stroke shall fall.

Some attribute to the Irish all sorts of excesses ; others tell us that these are old stories ; that there is not a more  
10 inoffensive race of merry creatures under heaven, and that their crimes are all hatched for them here in England, by the incubation of printers' boys, and are brought to market at times of distressing dearth in news. From all that I myself have seen of them, I can only say that the civilised (I mean the richer and titled) are as susceptible of heat as iron, and as impenetrable to light as granite. The half-barbarous are probably worse ; the utterly barbarous may be somewhat better. Like game-cocks, they must spur when they meet. One fights because he fights an Englishman ; another because  
20 the fellow he quarrels with comes from a distant county ; a third because the next parish is an eyesore to him, and his fist-mate is from it. The only thing in which they all agree as proper law is the tooth-for-tooth act. Luckily we have a bishop who is a native, and we called him before the queen. He represented to her majesty, that everything in Old Ireland tended to reproduce its kind ; crimes among others ; and he declared frankly, that if an honest man is murdered, or what is dearer to an honest man, if his honour is wounded in the person of his wife, it must be expected  
30 that he will retaliate. Her majesty delivered it as her opinion, that the latter case of vindictiveness was more likely to take effect than the former. But the bishop replied, that in his conscience he could not answer for either if the man was up. The dean of the same diocese gave us a more favourable report. Being a justice of the peace, he averred

most solemnly that no man ever had complained to him of murder, excepting one who had lost so many fore-teeth by a cudgel that his deposition could not be taken exactly; added to which, his head was a little clouded with drunkenness; furthermore, that extremely few women had adduced sufficiently clear proofs of violence, excepting those who were wilful, and resisted with tooth and nail. In all which cases it was difficult, nay impossible, to ascertain which violence began first and lasted longest.

There is not a nation upon earth that pretends to be so <sup>10</sup> superlatively generous and high-minded; and there is not one (I speak from experience) so utterly base and venal. I have positive proof that the nobility, in a mass, are agreed to sell, for a stipulated sum, all their rights and privileges, so much per man; and the queen is inclined thereunto. But would our parliament consent to pay money for a cargo of rotten pilchards? And would not our captains be readier to swamp than to import them? The noisest rogues in that kingdom, if not quieted by a halter, may be quieted by making them brief-collectors, and by allowing them first <sup>20</sup> to encourage the incendiary, then to denounce and hang him, and lastly to collect all the money they can, running up and down with the whining ferocity of half-starved hyænas, under pretence of repairing the damages their exhausted country hath sustained. Others ask modestly a few thousands a year, and no more, from those whom they represent to us as naked and famished; and prove clearly to every dispassionate man who hath a single drop of free blood in his veins, that at least this pittance is due to them for abandoning their liberal and lucrative professions, and <sup>30</sup> for endangering their valuable lives on the tempestuous seas, in order that the voice of Truth may sound for once upon the shores of England, and Humanity cast her shadow on the council-chamber.

I gave a dinner to a party of these fellows a few weeks ago.

I know not how many kings and princes were among them, nor how many poets and prophets and legislators and sages. When they were half-drunk, they coaxed and threatened; when they had gone somewhat deeper, they joked, and croaked, and hiccupped, and wept over sweet Ireland; and when they could neither stand nor sit any longer, they fell upon their knees and their noddles, and swore that limbs, life, liberty, Ireland, and God himself, were all at the queen's service. It was only their holy religion, the religion of their  
10 forefathers . . . here sobs interrupted some, howls others, execrations more, and the liquor they had ingulfed the rest. I looked down on them with stupor and astonishment, seeing faces, forms, dresses, much like ours, and recollecting their ignorance, levity, and ferocity. My pages drew them gently by the heels down the steps; my grooms set them upright (inasmuch as might be) on their horses; and the people in the streets, shouting and pelting, sent forward the beasts to their straw.

Various plans have been laid before us for civilising or  
20 coercing them. Among the pacific, it was proposed to make an offer to five hundred of the richer Jews in the Hanse-towns and in Poland, who should be raised to the dignity of the Irish peerage, and endowed with four thousand acres of good forfeited land, on condition of each paying two thousand pounds, and of keeping up ten horsemen and twenty foot, Germans or Poles, in readiness for service.

The Catholics bear nowhere such ill-will toward Jews as toward Protestants. Brooks make even worse neighbours than oceans do.

30 I myself saw no objection to the measure: but our gracious queen declared she had an insuperable one; *they stank!* We all acknowledged the strength of the argument, and took out our handkerchiefs. Lord Burleigh almost fainted; and Raleigh wondered how the Emperor Titus could bring up his men against Jerusalem.

.

'Ah!' said he, looking reverentially at her majesty, 'the star of Berenice shone above him! and what evil influence could that star not quell! what malignancy could it not annihilate!'

Hereupon he touched the earth with his brow until the queen said,

'Sir Walter! lift me up those laurels.'

At which manifestation of princely good-will he was advancing to kiss her majesty's hand, but she waved it, and said sharply,

'Stand there, dog!'

10

Now what tale have you for us?

*Spenser.* Interrogate me, my lord, that I may answer each question distinctly, my mind being in sad confusion at what I have seen and undergone.

*Essex.* Give me thy account and opinion of these very affairs as thou leftest them; for I would rather know one part well, than all imperfectly; and the violences of which I have heard within the day surpass belief.

Why weepest thou, my gentle Spenser? Have the rebels sacked thy house?

20

*Spenser.* They have plundered and utterly destroyed it.

*Essex.* I grieve for thee, and will see thee righted.

*Spenser.* In this they have little harmed me.

*Essex.* How! I have heard it reported that thy grounds are fertile, and thy mansion large and pleasant.

*Spenser.* If river and lake and meadow-ground and mountain could render any place the abode of pleasantness, pleasant was mine, indeed!

On the lovely banks of Mulla I found deep contentment. Under the dark alders did I muse and meditate. Innocent 30 hopes were my gravest cares, and my playfullest fancy was with kindly wishes. Ah! surely of all cruelties the worst is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone: I love the people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me not about them; I may speak injuriously.

*Essex.* Think rather then of thy happier hours and busi occupations; these likewise may instruct me.

*Spenser.* The first seeds I sowed in the garden, ere tl old castle was made habitable for my lovely bride, we acorns from Penshurst. I planted a little oak before m mansion at the birth of each child. My sons, I said to mysel shall often play in the shade of them when I am gone, an every year shall they take the measure of their growth, a fondly as I take theirs.

10 *Essex.* Well, well; but let not this thought make the weep so bitterly.

*Spenser.* Poison may ooze from beautiful plants; deadly grief from dearest reminiscences.

I *must* grieve, I *must* weep: it seems the law of God, and the only one that men are not disposed to contravene. In the performance of this alone do they effectually aid one another.

*Essex.* Spenser! I wish I had at hand any arguments or persuasions, of force sufficient to remove thy sorrow: but  
20 really I am not in the habit of seeing men grieve at anything, except the loss of favour at court, or of a hawk, or of a buck-hound. And were I to swear out my condolences to a man of thy discernment, in the same round roll-call phrases we employ with one another upon these occasions, I should be guilty, not of insincerity but of insolence. True grief hath ever something sacred in it; and when it visiteth a wise man and a brave one, is most holy.

Nay, kiss not my hand: he whom God smiteth hath God with him. In his presence what am I?

30 *Spenser.* Never so great, my lord, as at this hour, when you see aright who is greater. May he guide your counsels, and preserve your life and glory!

*Essex.* Where are thy friends? Are they with thee?

*Spenser.* Ah, where indeed! Generous, true-hearted Philip! where art thou! whose presence was unto me peace

and safety ; whose smile was contentment, and whose praise renown. My lord ! I cannot but think of him among still heavier losses : he was my earliest friend, and would have taught me wisdom.

*Essex.* Pastoral poetry, my dear Spenser, doth not require tears and lamentations. Dry thine eyes ; rebuild thine house : the queen and council, I venture to promise thee, will make ample amends for every evil thou hast sustained. What ! does that enforce thee to wail yet louder ?

*Spenser.* Pardon me, bear with me, most noble heart ! 10  
I have lost what no council, no queen, no Essex, can restore.

*Essex.* We will see that. There are other swords, and other arms to wield them, beside a Leicester's and a Raleigh's. Others can crush their enemies and serve their friends.

*Spenser.* O my sweet child ! And of many so powerful, many so wise and so beneficent, was there none to save thee ? None ! none !

*Essex.* I now perceive that thou lamentest what almost every father is destined to lament. Happiness must be 20  
bought, although the payment may be delayed. Consider ; the same calamity might have befallen thee here in London. Neither the houses of ambassadors, nor the palaces of kings, nor the altars of God himself, are asylums against death. How do I know but under this very roof there may sleep some latent calamity, that in an instant shall cover with gloom every inmate of the house, and every far dependant ?

*Spenser.* God avert it !

*Essex.* Every day, every hour of the year, do hundreds  
mourn what thou mournest. 30

*Spenser.* Oh, no, no, no ! Calamities there are around us ; calamities there are all over the earth ; calamities there are in all seasons ; but none in any season, none in any place, like mine.

*Essex.* So say all fathers, so say all husbands. Look at



any old mansion-house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered over the gateway, or the embayed window, and on the happy pair that haply is toying at it; nevertheless, thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fabric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and heard many wailings: and each time this was the heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot, and amid the laughing nymphs  
10 upon the arras. Old servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had deceived them, when they found that beauty and nobility could perish.

Edmund! the things that are too true pass by us as if they were not true at all; and when they have singled us out, then only do they strike us. Thou and I must go too. Perhaps the next year may blow us away with its fallen leaves.

*Spenser.* For you, my lord, many years (I trust) are waiting: I never shall see those fallen leaves. No leaf, no  
20 bud, will spring upon the earth before I sink into her breast for ever.

*Essex.* Thou, who art wiser than most men, shouldst bear with patience, equanimity, and courage, what is common to all.

*Spenser.* Enough! enough! enough! Have all men seen their infant burned to ashes before their eyes?

*Essex.* Gracious God! Merciful Father! what is this?

*Spenser.* Burned alive! burned to ashes! burned to ashes! The flames dart their serpent tongues through the  
30 nursery-window. I cannot quit thee, my Elizabeth! I cannot lay down our Edmund. Oh these flames! they persecute, they enthrall me, they curl round my temples, they hiss upon my brain, they taunt me with their fierce foul voices, they carp at me, they wither me, they consume me, throwing back to me a little of life, to roll and suffer in, with

their fangs upon me. Ask me, my lord, the things you wish to know from me; I may answer them; I am now composed again. Command me, my gracious lord! I would yet serve you; soon I shall be unable. You have stooped to raise me up; you have borne with me; you have pitied me, even like one not powerful; you have brought comfort, and will leave it with me; for gratitude is comfort.

Oh! my memory stands all a tip-toe on one burning point: when it drops from it, then it perishes. Spare me: ask me nothing; let me weep before you in peace; the 10 kindest act of greatness.

*Essex.* I should rather have dared to mount into the midst of the conflagration than I now dare intreat thee not to weep. The tears that overflow thy heart, my Spenser, will staunch and heal it in their sacred stream, but not without hope in God.

*Spenser.* My hope in God is that I may soon see again what he has taken from me. Amid the myriads of angels there is not one so beautiful: and even he (if there be any) who is appointed my guardian, could never love me so. 20 Ah! these are idle thoughts, vain wanderings, distempered dreams. If there ever were guardian angels, he who so wanted one, my helpless boy, would not have left these arms upon my knees.

*Essex.* God help and sustain thee, too gentle Spenser! I never will desert thee. But what am I? Great they have called me! Alas, how powerless then and infantile is greatness in the presence of calamity!

Come, give me thy hand: let us walk up and down the gallery. Bravely done! I will envy no more a Sidney or a 30 Raleigh.

## YOUNG WELLERBY

*Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare (1834)*

ETHELBERT! I think thou walkest but little; otherwise I should take thee with me, some fine fresh morning, as far as unto the first hamlet on the Cherwell. There lies young Wellerby, who, the year before, was wont to pass many hours of the day poetising amidst the ruins of Godstow nunnery. It is said that he bore a fondness toward a young maiden in that place, formerly a village, now containing but two old farmhouses. In my memory there were still extant several dormitories. Some lovesick girl had recollected  
 10 an ancient name, and had engraven on a stone with a garden-nail, which lay in rust near it,—‘Poore Rosamund.’

I entered these precincts, and beheld a youth of manly form and countenance, washing and wiping a stone with a handful of wet grass; and on my going up to him, and asking what he had found, he showed it to me.

The next time I saw him was near the banks of the Cherwell. He had tried, it appears, to forget or overcome his foolish passion, and had applied his whole mind unto study. He was foiled by his competitor; and now he sought  
 20 consolation in poetry. Whether this opened the wounds that had closed in his youthful breast, and malignant Love, in his revenge, poisoned it; or whether the disappointment he had experienced in finding others preferred to him, first in the paths of fortune, then in those of the muses,—he was thought to have died broken-hearted.

About half a mile from St. John’s College is the termination of a natural terrace, with the Cherwell close under it, in some places bright with yellow and red flowers glancing and glowing through the stream, and suddenly in others  
 30 dark with the shadows of many different trees, in broad overbending thickets, and with rushes spear-high, and party-coloured flags. After a walk in Midsummer, the

immersion of our hands into the cool and closing grass is surely not the least among our animal delights. I was just seated, and the first sensation of rest vibrated in me gently, as though it were music to the limbs, when I discovered by a hollow in the herbage that another was near. The long meadow-sweet and blooming burnet half concealed from me him whom the earth was about to hide totally and for ever.

'Master Batchelor!' said I, 'it is ill-sleeping by the water-side.' No answer was returned. I arose, went to the place, 10 and recognised poor Wellerby. His brow was moist, his cheek was warm. A few moments earlier, and that dismal lake whereunto and wherefrom the waters of life, the buoyant blood, ran no longer, might have received one vivifying ray reflected from my poor casement. I might not indeed have comforted—I have often failed: but there *is* one who never has; and the strengthener of the bruised reed should have been with us.

Remembering that his mother did abide one mile further on, I walked forward to the mansion, and asked her what 20 tidings she lately had received of her son. She replied, that having given up his mind to light studies, the fellows of the college would not elect him. The master had warned him beforehand to abandon his selfish poetry, take up manfully the quarter staff of logic, and wield it for St. John's, come who would into the ring. 'We want our man,' said he to me, 'and your son hath failed us in the hour of need. Madam, he hath been foully beaten in the schools by one he might have swallowed, with due exercise.'

'I rated him, told him I was poor, and he knew it. He was 30 stung, and threw himself upon my neck, and wept. Twelve days have passed since, and only three rainy ones. I hear he has been seen upon the knoll yonder, but hither he hath not come. I trust he knows at last the value of time, and I shall be heartily glad to see him after this accession of

knowledge. Twelve days, it is true, are rather a chink than a gap in time; yet, O gentle sir! they are that chink which makes the vase quite valueless. There are light words which may never be shaken off the mind they fall on. My child, who was hurt by me, will not let me see the marks.'

'Lady!' said I, 'none are left upon him. Be comforted! thou shalt see him this hour. All that thy God hath not taken is yet thine.'

She looked at me earnestly, and would have then asked something, but her voice failed her. There was no agony, no motion, save in the lips and cheeks. Being the widow of one who fought under Hawkins, she remembered his courage and sustained the shock, saying calmly, 'God's will be done! I pray that he find me as worthy as he findeth me willing to join them.'

Now, in her unearthly thoughts, she had led her only son to the bosom of her husband; and in her spirit (which often is permitted to pass the gates of death with holy love) she left them both with their Creator.

20 The curate of the village sent those who should bring home the body; and some days afterwards he came unto me, beseeching me to write the epitaph. Being no friend to stone-cutters' charges, I entered not into biography, but wrote these few words:

JOANNES WELLERBY,  
LITERARUM QUÆSIVIT GLORIAM,  
VIDET DEI.

## PELEUS AND THETIS

*Imaginary Conversations* (1829)

*Thetis.* O Peleus! O thou whom the gods conferred upon me for all my portion of happiness—and it was (I thought)  
30 too great——

*Peleus.* Goddess! to me, to thy Peleus, O how far more

than goddess! why then this sudden silence? why these tears? The last we shed were when the Fates divided us, saying the Earth was not thine, and the brother of Zeus, he the ruler of the waters, had called thee. Those that fall between the beloved at parting are bitter, and ought to be: woe to him who wishes they were not! but those that flow again at the returning light of the blessed feet, should be refreshing and divine as morn.

*Thetis.* Support me, support me in thy arms once more, once only. Lower not thy shoulder from my cheek, to gaze 10 at those features that (in times past) so pleased thee. The sky is serene; the heavens frown not on us: do they then prepare for us fresh sorrow? Prepare for us! ah me! the word of Zeus is spoken: our Achilles is discovered: he is borne away in the black hollow ships of Aulis, and would have flown faster than they sail, to Troy.

Surely there are those among the gods, or among the goddesses, who might have forewarned me; and they did not! Were there no omens, no auguries, no dreams, to shake thee from thy security? no priest to prophesy? And what 20 pastures are more beautiful than Larissa's? what victims more stately? Could the soothsayers turn aside their eyes from these?

*Peleus.* Approach with me and touch the altar, O my beloved! Doth not thy finger now impress the soft embers of incense? how often hath it burned, for him, for thee! And the lowings of the herds are audible for their leaders, from the sources of Apidanus and Enipeus to the sea-beach. They may yet prevail.

*Thetis.* Alas! alas! priests can foretell but not avert the 30 future; and all they can give us are vain promises and abiding fears.

*Peleus.* Despond not, my long-lost Thetis! Hath not a god led thee back to me? Why not hope then he will restore our son? Which of them all hath such a boy offended?

*Thetis.* Uncertainties—worse than uncertainties—overthrow and overwhelm me.

*Peleus.* There is a comfort in the midst of every uncertainty, saving those which perplex the gods and confound the godlike, Love's. Be comforted! not by my kisses, but by my words. Achilles may live till our old age. *Ours!* Had I forgotten thy divinity? forgotten it in thy beauty? Other mortals think their beloved partake of it then mostly when they are gazing on their charms; but thy tenderness is  
10 more than godlike; and never have I known, never have I wished to know, whether ought in our inferior nature may resemble it.

*Thetis.* A mortal so immutable! the Powers above are less.

*Peleus.* Time without grief would not have greatly changed me.

*Thetis.* There is a loveliness which youth may be without, and which the gods want. To the voice of compassion not a shell in all the ocean is attuned; and no tear ever dropped upon Olympus. Thou lookest as fondly as ever, and  
20 more pensively. Have time and grief done this? and they alone? my Peleus! Tell me again, have no freshly found anxieties?—

*Peleus.* Smile thus! O smile anew and forget thy sorrows. Ages shall fly over my tomb, while thou art flourishing in imperishable youth, the desire of gods, the light of the depths of Ocean, the inspirer and sustainer of ever-flowing song.

*Thetis.* I receive thy words, and bless them. Gods *may* desire me: I have loved Peleus. Our union had many  
30 obstacles; the envy of mortals, the jealousy of immortals, hostility and persecution from around, from below, and from above. When we were happy they parted us; and again they unite us in eternal grief.

*Peleus.* The wish of a divinity is powerfuller than the elements, and swifter than the light. Hence thou (what to

me is impossible) mayest see the sweet Achilles every day, every hour.

*Thetis.* How few! alas how few! I see him in the dust, in agony, in death: I see his blood on the flints, his yellow hair flapping in its current, his hand unable to remove it from his eyes. I hear his voice; and it calls not upon me! Mothers are soon forgotten! It is weakness to love the weak! I could not save him! He would have left the caverns of Ocean, and the groves and meadows of Elysium, though resounding with the songs of love and heroism, for a field 10 of battle.

*Peleus.* He may yet live many years. Troy hath been taken once already.

*Thetis.* He must perish; and at Troy; and now.

*Peleus.* The *now* of the gods is more than life's duration: other gods and other worlds are formed within it. If indeed he must perish at Troy, his ashes will lie softly on hers. Thus fall our beauteous son! thus rest Achilles!

*Thetis.* Twice nine years have scarcely yet passed over his head; twice nine have not yet rolled away since 'O the 20 youth of Æmathia! O the swift, the golden-haired Peleus!' were the only words sounded in the halls of Tethys. How many shells were broken for their hoarseness! how many reproofs were heard by the Tritons for interrupting the slumbers—of those who never slept! But they feigned sound sleep: and joy and kindness left the hearts of sisters. We loved too well for others to love *us*.

Why do I remember the day? Why do I remind thee of it?—my Achilles dies! it was the day that gave me my Achilles! Dearer he was to me than the light of heaven, 30 before he ever saw it: and how much dearer now, when, bursting forth on earth like its first dayspring, all the loveliness of Nature stands back, and grows pale and faint before his.

*Peleus.* O thou art fallen! thou art fallen through my



embrace, when I thought on him more than on thee. Look up again; look, and forgive me. No: thy forgiveness I deserve not—but did I deserve thy love? Thy solitude, thy abasement, thy parental tears, and thy fall to the earth, are from me! Why doth aught of youth linger with me? Why not come age and death? The monster of Calydon made (as thou knowest) his first and most violent rush against this arm; no longer fit for war, no longer a defence to the people. And is the day too come when it no longer can sustain my  
 10 Thetis?

*Thetis.* Protend it not to the skies! invoke not, name not, any Deity! I fear them all. Nay, lift me not thus above thy head, O Peleus! reproaching the gods with such an awful look; with a look of beauty which they will not pity, with a look of defiance which they may not brook.

*Peleus.* Doth not my hand enclasp that slender foot, at which the waves of Ocean cease to be tumultuous, and the children of Æolus to disturb their peace? O, if in the celestial coolness of thy cheek, now resting on my head,  
 20 there be not the breath and gift of immortality; O if Zeus hath any thunderbolt in reserve for me; let this, my beloved Thetis, be the hour!

## ACHILLES AND HELENA

*Imaginary Conversations of Greeks and Romans* (1853)

*Helena.* Where am I? Desert me not, O ye blessed from above! ye twain who brought me hither!

Was it a dream?

Stranger! thou seemest thoughtful; couldst thou answer me? Why so silent? I beseech and implore thee, speak.

*Achilles.* Neither thy feet nor the feet of mules have borne thee where thou standest. Whether in the hour of  
 30 departing sleep, or at what hour of the morning, I know

not, O Helena, but Aphroditè and Thetis, inclining to my prayer, have, as thou art conscious, led thee into these solitudes. To me also have they shown the way; that I might behold the pride of Sparta, the marvel of the Earth, and—how my heart swells and agonises at the thought!—the cause of innumerable woes to Hellas.

*Helena.* Stranger! thou art indeed one whom the goddesses or gods might lead, and glory in; such is thy stature, thy voice, and thy demeanour; but who, if earthly, art thou?

10

*Achilles.* Before thee, O Helena, stands Achilles, son of Peleus. Tremble not, turn not pale, bend not thy knees, O Helena.

*Helena.* Spare me, thou goddess-born! thou cherished and only son of silver-footed Thetis! Chryseïs and Briseïs ought to soften and content thy heart. Lead not me also into captivity. Woes too surely have I brought down on Hellas; but woes have been mine alike, and will for ever be.

*Achilles.* Daughter of Zeus! what word hast thou spoken! Chryseïs, child of the aged priest who performs in this land due sacrifices to Apollo, fell to the lot of another; an insolent and unworthy man, who hath already brought more sorrows upon our people than thou hast; so that dogs and vultures prey on the brave who sank without a wound. Briseïs is indeed mine; the lovely and dutiful Briseïs. He, unjust and contumelious, proud at once and base, would tear her from me. But, gods above! in what region has the wolf with impunity dared to seize upon the kid which the lion hath taken?

Talk not of being led into servitude. Could mortal be guilty of such impiety? Hath it never thundered on these mountain heads? Doth Zeus, the wide-seeing, see all the Earth but Ida? doth he watch over all but his own? Capaneus and Typhœus less offended him, than would the wretch whose grasp should violate the golden hair of

30

Helena. And dost thou still tremble? irresolute and distrustful!

*Helena.* I must tremble; and more and more.

*Achilles.* Take my hand: be confident: be comforted.

*Helena.* May I take it? may I hold it? I am comforted.

*Achilles.* The scene around us, calm and silent as the sky itself, tranquillises thee; and so it ought. Turnest thou to survey it? perhaps it is unknown to thee.

*Helena.* Truly; for since my arrival I have never gone  
10 beyond the walls of the city.

*Achilles.* Look then around thee freely, perplexed no longer. Pleasant is this level eminence, surrounded by broom and myrtle, and crisp-leaved beech and broad dark pine above. Pleasant the short slender grass, bent by insects as they alight on it or climb along it, and shining up into our eyes, interrupted by tall sisterhoods of gray lavender, and by dark-eyed cistus, and by lightsome citisus, and by little troops of serpolet running in disorder here and there.

20 *Helena.* Wonderful! how didst thou ever learn to name so many plants?

*Achilles.* Chiron taught me them, when I walked at his side while he was culling herbs for the benefit of his brethren. All these he taught me, and at least twenty more; for wondrous was his wisdom, boundless his knowledge, and I was proud to learn.

Ah look again! look at those little yellow poppies; they appear to be just come out to catch all that the sun will throw into their cups: they appear in their joyance and  
30 incipient dance to call upon the lyre to sing among them.

*Helena.* Childish! for one with such a spear against his shoulder; terrific even its shadow; it seems to make a chasm across the plain.

*Achilles.* To talk or to think like a child is not always a proof of folly: it may sometimes push aside heavy griefs

where the strength of wisdom fails. What art thou pondering, Helena?

*Helena.* Recollecting the names of the plants. Several of them I do believe I had heard before, but had quite forgotten; my memory will be better now.

*Achilles.* Better now? in the midst of war and tumult?

*Helena.* I am sure it will be, for didst thou not say that Chiron taught them?

*Achilles.* He sang to me over the lyre the lives of Narcissus and Hyacinthus, brought back by the beautiful Hours, of 10  
silent unwearied feet, regular as the stars in their courses. Many of the trees and bright-eyed flowers once lived and moved, and spoke as we are speaking. They may yet have memories, although they have cares no longer.

*Helena.* Ah! then they have no memories; and they see their own beauty only.

*Achilles.* Helena! thou turnest pale, and droopest.

*Helena.* The odour of the blossoms, or of the gums, or the highth of the place, or something else, makes me dizzy. Can it be the wind in my ears? 20

*Achilles.* There is none.

*Helena.* I could wish there were a little.

*Achilles.* Be seated, O Helena!

*Helena.* The feeble are obedient: the weary may rest even in the presence of the powerful.

*Achilles.* On this very ground where we are now reposing, they who conducted us hither told me, the fatal prize of beauty was awarded. One of them smiled; the other, whom in duty I love the most, looked anxious, and let fall some tears.

*Helena.* Yet she was not one of the vanquished. 30

*Achilles.* Goddesses contended for it; Helena was afar.

*Helena.* Fatal was the decision of the arbiter!

But could not the venerable Peleus, nor Pyrrhus the infant so beautiful and so helpless, detain thee, O Achilles, from this sad, sad war?

*Achilles.* No reverence or kindness for the race of Atreus brought me against Troy ; I detest and abhor both brothers : but another man is more hateful to me still. Forbear we to name him. The valiant, holding the hearth as sacred as the temple, is never a violator of hospitality. He carries not away the gold he finds in the house ; he folds not up the purple linen worked for solemnities, about to convey it from the cedar chest to the dark ship, together with the wife confided to his protection in her husband's absence, and  
10 sitting close and expectant by the altar of the gods.

It was no merit in Menelaus to love thee ; it was a crime in another—I will not say to love, for even Priam or Nestor might love thee—but to avow it, and act on the avowal.

*Helena.* Menelaus, it is true, was fond of me, when Paris was sent by Aphroditè to our house. It would have been very wrong to break my vow to Menelaus, but Aphroditè urged me by day and by night, telling me that to make her break hers to Paris would be quite inexpiable. She told Paris the same thing at the same hour ; and as often. He  
20 repeated it to me every morning : his dreams tallied with mine exactly. At last——

*Achilles.* The last is not yet come. Helena ! by the Immortals ! if ever I meet him in battle I transfix him with this spear.

*Helena.* Pray do not. Aphroditè would be angry and never forgive thee.

*Achilles.* I am not sure of that ; she soon pardons. Variable as Iris, one day she favours and the next day she forsakes.

30 *Helena.* She may then forsake *me*.

*Achilles.* Other deities, O Helena, watch over and protect thee. Thy two brave brothers are with those deities now, and never are absent from their higher festivals.

*Helena.* They could protect me were they living, and they would. O that thou couldst but have seen them !

*Achilles.* Companions of my father on the borders of the Phasis, they became his guests before they went all three to hunt the boar in the brakes of Calydon. Thence too the beauty of a woman brought many sorrows into brave men's breasts, and caused many tears to hang long and heavily on the eyelashes of matrons.

*Helena.* Didst thou indeed see my brothers at that season? Yes, certainly.

*Achilles.* I saw them not, desirous though I always was of seeing them, that I might have learnt from them, and 10 might have practised with them, whatever is laudable and manly. But my father, fearing my impetuosity, as he said, and my inexperience, sent me away. Soothsayers had foretold some mischief to me from an arrow: and among the brakes many arrows might fly wide, glancing from trees.

*Helena.* I wish thou hadst seen them, were it only once. Three such youths together the blessed sun will never shine upon again.

O my sweet brothers! how they tended me! how they loved me! how often they wished me to mount their horses 20 and to hurl their javelins. They could only teach me to swim with them; and when I had well learnt it I was more afraid than at first. It gratified me to be praised for anything but swimming.

Happy, happy hours! soon over! Does happiness always go away before beauty? It must go then: surely it might stay that little while. Alas! dear Castor! and dearer Polydeucès! often shall I think of you as ye were (and oh! as I was) on the banks of the Eurotas. Brave noble creatures! they were as tall, as terrible, and almost as beautiful, as 30 thou art. Be not wroth! Blush no more for me.

*Achilles.* Helena! Helena! wife of Menelaus! my mother is reported to have left about me only one place vulnerable: I have at last found where it is. Farewell.

*Helena.* O leave me not! Earnestly I entreat and implore

thee, leave me not alone. These solitudes are terrible: there must be wild beasts among them; there certainly are Fauns and Satyrs. And there is Cybelè who carries towers and temples on her head; who hates and abhors Aphroditè, who persecutes those *she* favours, and whose priests are so cruel as to be cruel even to themselves.

*Achilles.* According to their promise, the goddesses who brought thee hither in a cloud will in a cloud reconduct thee, safely and unseen, into the city.

10 Again, O daughter of Leda and of Zeus, farewell!

## ORATION OF PERICLES TO THE SOLDIERS ROUND SAMOS

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

LITTLE time is now left us, O Athenians, between the consideration and the accomplishment of our duties. The justice of the cause, when it was first submitted to your decision in the Agora, was acknowledged with acclamations; the success of it you have insured by your irresistible energy. The port of Samos is in our possession, and we have occupied all the eminences round her walls. Patience is now as requisite to us as to the enemy: for, although every city which can be surrounded, can be captured, yet in some,  
20 where courage and numbers have been insufficient to drive off the besieger, Nature and Art may have thrown up obstacles to impede his progress. Such is Samos; the strongest fortress in Europe, excepting only Byzantion. But Byzantion fell before our fathers; and unless she become less deaf to the reclamations of honour, less indifferent to the sanctitude of treaties, unless she prefer her fellow-soldiers to her common enemy, freedom to aristocracy, friends to strangers, Greeks to Asiatics, she shall abase her Thracian fierceness before *us*. However, we will neither

spurn the suppliant nor punish the repentant: our arms we will turn for ever, as we turn them now, against the malicious rival, the alienated relative, the apostate confederate, and the proud oppressor. Where a sense of dignity is faint and feeble, and where reason hath lain unexercised and inert, many nations have occasionally been happy and even flourishing under kings: but oligarchy hath ever been a curse to all, from its commencement to its close. To remove it eternally from the vicinity of Miletus, and from the well-disposed of that very city by which hostilities are denounced 10 against her, is at once our interest and our duty. For oligarchs in every part of the world are necessarily our enemies, since we have always shown our fixed determination to aid and support with all our strength the defenders of civility and freedom. It is not in our power (for against our institutions and consciences we Athenians can do nothing), it is not in our power, I repeat it, to sit idly by, while those who were our fellow-combatants against the Persian, and who suffered from his aggression even more 20 than we did, are assailed by degenerate Ionians, whose usurpation rests on Persia. We have enemies wherever there is injustice done to Greeks; and we will abolish that injustice, and we will quell those enemies. Wherever there are equal laws we have friends; and those friends we will succour, and those laws we will maintain. On which side do the considerate and religious look forward to the countenance of the Gods? Often have they deferred indeed their righteous judgments, but never have they deserted the long-suffering and the brave. Upon the ground where we were standing when you last heard my appeal to you, were not 30 Xerxes and his myriads encamped? What drove them from it? The wisdom, force, and fortitude, breathed into your hearts by the immortal Gods. Preserve them with equal constancy; and your return, I promise you, shall not have been more glorious from Salamis than from Samos.



## ORATION OF PERICLES ON THE APPROACH OF THE LACEDAEMONIANS TO ATHENS

*Pericles and Aspasia (1836)*

LONG ago, and lately, and in every age intervening, O Athenians! have you experienced the jealousy and insolence of Lacedæmon. She listens now to the complaints of Corinth, because the people of Corcyra will endure no longer her vexations, and because their navy, in which the greater part of the mariners have fought and conquered by the side of ours, seek refuge in the Piræus. A little while ago she dared to insist that we should admit the ships of Megara to our harbour, her merchandise to our markets,  
 10 when Megara had broken her faith with us, and gone over to the Spartans. Even this indignity we might perhaps have endured. We told the Lacedæmonians that we would admit the Megaræans to that privilege, if the ports of Sparta would admit us and our allies: although we and our allies were never in such relationship with her, and therefore could never have fallen off from her. She disdained to listen to a proposal so reasonable, to a concession so little to be expected from us. Resolved to prove to her that generosity, and not fear, dictated it, we chastised the perfidious Megara.  
 20 The king of the Lacedæmonians, Archidamos, a wiser and honester man than any of his people, is forced to obey the passions he would control; and an army of sixty thousand men is marching under his command to ravage Attica. The braver will rather burn their harvests than transfer to a sanguinary and insatiable enemy the means of inflicting evil on their relatives and friends. Few, I trust, are base enough, sacrilegious enough, to treat as guests those whom you before men and Gods denounce as enemies. We will receive within our walls the firm and faithful. And

now let the orators who have blamed our expenditure in the fortification of the city, tell us again that it was improvident. They would be flying in dismay had not those bulwarks been raised effectually. Did it require any sagacity to foresee that Athens would be the envy of every state around? Was there any man so ignorant as not to know that he who has lost all his enemies will soon lose all his energy, and that men are no more men when they cease to act, than rivers are rivers when they cease to run? The forces of our assailants must be broken against our walls. Our fleets are 10 our farms henceforward, until the Spartans find that, if they can subsist on little, they cannot so well subsist on stones and ashes. Their forces are vast; but vast forces have never much hurt us. Marathon and Plataea were scarcely wide enough for our trophies; a victorious army, an unvanquished fleet, Miltiades himself, retired unsuccessful from the rock of Paros. Shall we tremble then before a tumultuous multitude, ignorant how cities are defended or assailed? Shall we prevent them from coming to their discomfiture and 20 destruction? Firmly do I believe that the Protectress of our city leads them against it to avenge her cause. They may ravage the lands; they cannot cultivate, they cannot hold them. Mischief they will do, and great; much of our time, much of our patience, much of our perseverance, and something of our courage, are required. At present I do not number this event among our happiest. We must owe our glory partly to ourselves and partly to our enemies. They offer us the means of greatness; let us accept their offer. Brief danger is the price of long security. The countryman, from the mists of the morning, not only fore- 30 tells the brightness of the day, but discerns in them sources of fertility; and he remembers in his supplications to the immortal Gods to thank them alike for both blessings. It is thus, O men of Athens, that you have constantly looked up at calamities. Never have they depressed you: always

have they chastened your hearts, always have they exalted your courage. Impelled by the breath of Xerxes, the locusts of Asia consumed your harvests; your habitations crumbled away as they swarmed along: the temples of the Gods lay prostrate; the Gods themselves bowed and fell: the men of Athens rose higher than ever. They had turned their faces in grief from the scene of devastation and impiety; but they listened to a provident valour, and the myriads of insects that had plagued them were consumed.

10 There is affront in exhortation. I have spoken.

## PERICLES ON HIS LIFE

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

It is right and orderly, that he who has partaken so largely in the prosperity of the Athenians, should close the procession of their calamities. The fever that has depopulated our city returned upon me last night, and Hippocrates and Acron tell me that my end is near.

When we agreed, O Aspasia, in the beginning of our loves, to communicate our thoughts by writing, even while we were both in Athens, and when we had many reasons for it, we little foresaw the more powerful one that has rendered  
20 it necessary of late. We never can meet again: the laws forbid it, and love itself enforces them. Let wisdom be heard by you as imperturbably, and affection as authoritatively, as ever: and remember that the sorrow of Pericles can arise but from the bosom of Aspasia. There is only one word of tenderness we could say, which we have not said oftentimes before; and there is no consolation in it. The happy never say, and never hear said, farewell.

Reviewing the course of my life, it appears to me at one moment as if we met but yesterday; at another as if cen-  
30 turies had passed within it; for within it have existed the

greater part of those who, since the origin of the world, have been the luminaries of the human race. Damon called me from my music to look at Aristides on his way to exile: and my father pressed the wrist by which he was leading me along, and whispered in my ear,

‘Walk quickly by; glance cautiously; it is there Miltiades is in prison.’

In my boyhood Pindar took me up in his arms, when he brought to our house the dirge he had composed for the funeral of my grandfather: in my adolescence I offered the 10 rights of hospitality to Empedocles: not long afterward I embraced the neck of Æschylus, about to abandon his country. With Sophocles I have argued on eloquence; with Euripides on polity and ethics; I have discoursed, as became an inquirer, with Protagoras and Democritus, with Anaxagoras and Meton. From Herodotus I have listened to the most instructive history, conveyed in a language the most copious and the most harmonious; a man worthy to carry away the collected suffrages of universal Greece; a man worthy to throw open the temples of Egypt, and to 20 celebrate the exploits of Cyrus. And from Thucydides, who alone can succeed to him, how recently did my Aspasia hear with me the energetic praises of his just supremacy!

As if the festival of life were incomplete, and wanted one great ornament to crown it, Phidias placed before us, in ivory and gold, the tutelary Deity of this land, and the Zeus of Homer and Olympus.

To have lived with such men, to have enjoyed their familiarity and esteem, overpays all labours and anxieties. I were unworthy of the friendships I have commemorated, 30 were I forgetful of the latest. Sacred it ought to be, formed as it was under the portico of Death, my friendship with the most sagacious, the most scientific, the most beneficent of philosophers, Acron and Hippocrates. If mortal could war against Pestilence and Destiny, they had been victorious. I

leave them in the field; unfortunate he who finds them among the fallen!

And now, at the close of my day, when every light is dim and every guest departed, let me own that these wane before me, remembering, as I do in the pride and fulness of my heart, that Athens confided her glory, and Aspasia her happiness, to me.

Have I been a faithful guardian? do I resign them to the custody of the Gods undiminished and unimpaired? Welcome then, welcome, my last hour! After enjoying for so great a number of years, in my public and my private life, what I believe has never been the lot of any other, I now extend my hand to the urn, and take without reluctance or hesitation what is the lot of all.

## THE COUNSELS OF ANAXAGORAS

*Pericles and Aspasia (1836)*

THE gratitude and love I owe to Pericles induces me to write the very day I have landed at Lampsacus. You are prudent, Aspasia! and your prudence is of the best quality; instinctive delicacy. But I am older than you, or than Pericles, although than Pericles by only six years; and, 20 having no other pretext to counsel you, will rest upon this. Do not press him to abstain from public business: for, supposing he is by nature no obstinate man, yet the long possession of authority has accustomed him to grasp the tighter what is touched; as shell-fish contract the claws at an atom. The simile is not an elegant one, but I offer it as the most apposite. He might believe that you fear for him, and that you wish him to fear: this alone would make him pertinacious. Let everything take its season with him. Perhaps it is necessary that he should control the multitude: if it is, 30 he will know it; even you could not stir him, and would

only molest him by the attempt. Age is coming on. This will not loosen his tenacity of power—it usually has quite the contrary effect—but it will induce him to give up more of his time to the studies he has always delighted in, which however were insufficient for the full activity of his mind. Mine is a sluggard: I have surrendered it entirely to philosophy, and it has made little or no progress: it has dwelt pleased with hardly anything it has embraced, and has often run back again from fond prepossessions to startling doubts: it could not help it. 10

But as we sometimes find one thing while we are looking for another, so, if truth escaped me, happiness and contentment fell in my way, and have accompanied me even to Lampsacus.

Be cautious, O Aspasia! of discoursing on philosophy. Is it not in philosophy as in love? the more we have of it, and the less we talk about it, the better. Never touch upon religion with anybody. The irreligious are incurable and insensible; the religious are morbid and irritable: the former would scorn, the latter would strangle you. It appears to me to be not only a dangerous, but, what is worse, an indelicate 20 thing, to place ourselves where we are likely to see fevers and phrenzies, writhings and distortions, debilities and deformities. Religion at Athens is like a fountain near Dodona, which extinguishes a lighted torch, and which gives a flame of its own to an unlighted one held down to it. Keep yours in your chamber; and let the people run about with theirs; but remember, it is rather apt to catch the skirts. Believe me, I am happy: I am not deprived of my friends. Imagination is little less strong in our later years than in our earlier. True, it alights on fewer objects, but it rests longer on them, 30 and sees them better. Pericles first, and then you, and then Meton, occupy my thoughts. I am with you still; I study with you, just as before, although nobody talks aloud in the schoolroom.

This is the pleasantest part of life. Oblivion throws her

light coverlet over our infancy; and soon after we are out of the cradle we forget how soundly we had been slumbering, and how delightful were our dreams. Toil and pleasure contend for us almost the instant we rise from it: and weariness follows whichever has carried us away. We stop awhile, look around us, wonder to find we have completed the circle of existence, fold our arms, and fall asleep again.

## ASPASIA TO CLEONE

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

THANKS for the verses! I hope Leuconœ was as grateful as I am, and as sensible to their power of soothing.

10 Thanks too for the perfumes! Pericles is ashamed of acknowledging he is fond of them; but I am resolved to betray one secret of his: I have caught him several times *trying* them, as he called it.

How many things are there that people pretend to dislike, without any reason, as far as we know, for the dislike or the pretence!

I love sweet odours. Surely my Cleone herself must have breathed her very soul into these! Let me smell them again: let me inhale them into the sanctuary of my breast, lighted  
20 up by her love for their reception.

But, ah Cleone! what an importunate and exacting creature is Aspasia! Have you no willows fresh-peeled? none lying upon the bank for baskets, white, rounded, and delicate, as your fingers! How fragrant they were formerly! I have seen none lately. Do you remember the cross old Hermesionax? how he ran to beat us for breaking his twigs; and how, after looking in our faces, he seated himself down again, finished his basket, disbursed from a goat-skin a corroded clod of rancid cheese, put it in, pushed it to us,  
30 forced it under my arm, told us to carry it home *with the Gods!* and lifted up both hands and blest us.

I do not wish *that* one exactly; cheese is the cruellest of deaths to me; and Pericles abhors it.

I am running over trifling occurrences which you must have forgotten. You are upon the spot, and have no occasion to recall to memory how the munificent old basket-maker looked after us, not seeing his dog at our heels; how we coaxed the lean, shaggy, suspicious animal; how many devices we contrived to throw down, or let slip, so that the good man might not observe it, the pestilence you insisted on carrying; how many names we called the dog by, ere we <sup>10</sup> found the true one, *Cyrus*; how, when we had drawn him behind the lentisk, we rewarded him for his assiduities, holding each an ear nevertheless, that he might not carry back the gift to his master; and how we laughed at our fears, when a single jerk of the head served at once to engulf the treasure and to disengage him.

I shall always love the smell of the peeled willow. Have you none for me? Is there no young poplar then, with a tear in his eye on bursting into bud? I am not speaking by metaphor and Asiatically. I want the poplars, the willows, <sup>20</sup> the water-lilies, and the soft green herbage. How we enjoyed it on the Mæander! what liberties we took with it! robbing it of the flowers it had educated, of those it was rearing, of those that came confidently out to meet us, and of those that hid themselves. None escaped us. For these remembrances, green is the colour I love best. It brings me to the *Fortunate Island* and my Cleone; it brings me back to Childhood, the proud little nurse of Youth, brighter of eye and lighter of heart than Youth herself.

These are not regrets, Cleone; they are respirations, <sup>30</sup> necessary to existence. You may call them half-wishes if you will. We are poor indeed when we have no half-wishes left us. The heart and the imagination close the shutters the instant they are gone.

Do not chide me then for coming to you after the blossoms



and buds and herbage: do not keep to yourself all the grass on the Mæander. We used to share it; we will now. I love it wherever I can get a glimpse of it. It is the home of the eyes, ever ready to receive them, and spreading its cool couch for their repose.

## THE DEATH OF ACCIAIOLI

*The Pentameron (1837)*

PROBABLY, so near as I am to Florence, and so dear as Florence hath always been to me, I shall see that city no more. The last time I saw it, I only passed through. Four years ago, you remember, I lost my friend Acciaiolì. Early  
10 in the summer of the preceding, his kindness had induced him to invite me again to Naples, and I undertook a journey to the place where my life had been too happy. There are many who pay dearly for sunshine early in the season: many, for pleasure in the prime of life. After one day lost in idleness at Naples, if intense and incessant thoughts (however fruitless) may be called so, I proceeded by water to Sorrento, and thence over the mountains to Amalfi. Here, amid whatever is most beautiful and most wonderful in scenery, I found the Seniscalco. His palace, his gardens, his  
20 terraces, his woods, abstracted his mind entirely from the solitudes of state; and I was gratified at finding in the absolute ruler of a kingdom the absolute master of his time. Rare felicity! and he enjoyed it the more after the toils of business and the intricacies of policy. His reception of me was most cordial. He showed me his long avenues of oranges and citrons: he helped me to mount the banks of slippery short herbage, whence we could look down on their dark masses, and their broad irregular belts, gemmed with golden fruit and sparkling flowers. We stood high above  
30 them, but not above their fragrance, and sometimes we

wished the breeze to bring us it, and sometimes to carry a part of it away: and the breeze came and went as if obedient to our volition. Another day he conducted me farther from the palace, and showed me, with greater pride than I had ever seen in him before, the pale-green olives, on little smooth plants, the first year of their bearing. 'I will teach my people here,' said he, 'to make as delicate oil as any of our Tuscans.' We had feasts among the caverns: we had dances by day under the shade of the mulberries, by night under the lamps of the arcade: we had music on the shore and on the water.

When next I stood before him, it was afar from these. Torches flamed through the pine-forest of Certosa: priests and monks led the procession: the sound of the brook alone filled up the intervals of the dirge: and other plumes than the dancers' waved round what was Acciaioli.

## THE DREAM OF BOCCACCIO

*The Pentameron (1837)*

*Boccaccio.* I prayed; and my breast, after some few tears, grew calmer. Yet sleep did not ensue until the break of morning, when the dropping of soft rain on the leaves of the fig-tree at the window, and the chirping of a little bird, to tell another there was shelter under them, brought me repose and slumber. Scarcely had I closed my eyes, if indeed time can be reckoned any more in sleep than in heaven, when my Fiametta seemed to have led me into the meadow. You will see it below you: turn away that branch: gently! gently! do not break it; for the little bird sat there.

*Petrarca.* I think, Giovanni, I can divine the place. Although this fig-tree, growing out of the wall between the cellar and us, is fantastic enough in its branches, yet that other which I see yonder, bent down and forced to crawl 30

along the grass by the prepotency of the young shapely walnut-tree, is much more so. It forms a seat, about a cubit above the ground, level and long enough for several.

*Boccaccio.* Ha! you fancy it must be a favourite spot with me, because of the two strong forked stakes wherewith it is propped and supported!

*Petrarca.* Poets know the haunts of poets at first sight; and he who loved Laura—O Laura! did I say he who *loved* thee?—hath whisperings where those feet would wander  
10 which have been restless after Fiametta.

*Boccaccio.* It is true, my imagination has often conducted her thither; but here in this chamber she appeared to me more visibly in a dream.

'Thy prayers have been heard, O Giovanni,' said she.

I sprang to embrace her.

'Do not spill the water! Ah! you have spilt a part of it.'

I then observed in her hand a crystal vase. A few drops were sparkling on the sides and running down the rim: a few were trickling from the base and from the hand that  
20 held it.

'I must go down to the brook,' said she, 'and fill it again as it was filled before.'

What a moment of agony was this to me! Could I be certain how long might be her absence? She went: I was following: she made a sign for me to turn back: I disobeyed her only an instant: yet my sense of disobedience, increasing my feebleness and confusion, made me lose sight of her. In the next moment she was again at my side, with the cup quite full. I stood motionless: I feared my breath  
30 might shake the water over. I looked her in the face for her commands—and to see it—to see it so calm, so beneficent, so beautiful. I was forgetting what I had prayed for, when she lowered her head, tasted of the cup, and gave it me. I drank; and suddenly sprang forth before me many groves and palaces and gardens, and their statues and their avenues,

and their labyrinths of alaternus and bay, and alcoves of citron, and watchful loopholes in the retirements of impenetrable pomegranate. Farther off, just below where the fountain slipt away from its marble hall and guardian gods, arose, from their beds of moss and drosera and darkest grass, the sisterhood of oleanders, fond of tantalising with their bosomed flowers and their moist and pouting blossoms the little shy rivulet, and of covering its face with all the colours of the dawn. My dream expanded and moved forward. I trod again the dust of Posilipo, soft as the feathers in the wings of Sleep. I emerged on Baia; I crossed her innumerable arches; I loitered in the breezy sunshine of her mole; I trusted the faithful seclusion of her caverns, the keepers of so many secrets; and I reposed on the buoyancy of her tepid sea. Then Naples, and her theatres and her churches, and grottoes and dells and forts and promontories, rushed forward in confusion, now among soft whispers, now among sweetest sounds, and subsided, and sank, and disappeared. Yet a memory seemed to come fresh from every one: each had time enough for its tale, for its pleasure, for its reflection, for its pang. As I mounted with silent steps the narrow staircase of the old palace, how distinctly did I feel against the palm of my hand the coldness of that smooth stonework, and the greater of the cramps of iron in it!

'Ah me! is this forgetting?' cried I anxiously to Fiametta.

'We must recall these scenes before us,' she replied: 'such is the punishment of them. Let us hope and believe that the apparition, and the compunction which must follow it, will be accepted as the full penalty, and that both will pass away almost together.'

I feared to lose anything attendant on her presence: I feared to approach her forehead with my lips: I feared to touch the lily on its long wavy leaf in her hair, which filled my whole heart with fragrance. Venerating, adoring, I bowed my head at last to kiss her snow-white robe, and

trembled at my presumption. And yet the effulgence of her countenance vivified while it chastened me. I loved her—I must not say *more* than ever—*better* than ever; it was Fiametta who had inhabited the skies. As my hand opened toward her,

‘Beware!’ said she, faintly smiling; ‘beware, Giovanni! Take only the crystal; take it, and drink again.’

‘Must all be then forgotten?’ said I sorrowfully.

‘Remember your prayer and mine, Giovanni? Shall both  
10 have been granted—O how much worse than in vain?’

I drank instantly; I drank largely. How cool my bosom grew; how could it grow so cool before her? But it was not to remain in its quiescency; its trials were not yet over. I will not, Francesco! no, I may not commemorate the incidents she related to me, nor which of us said, ‘I blush for having loved *first*,’ nor which of us replied, ‘Say *least*, say *least*, and blush again.’

The charm of the words (for I felt not the encumbrance of the body nor the acuteness of the spirit) seemed to possess  
20 me wholly. Although the water gave me strength and comfort, and somewhat of celestial pleasure, many tears fell around the border of the vase as she held it up before me, exhorting me to take courage, and inviting me with more than exhortation to accomplish my deliverance. She came nearer, more tenderly, more earnestly; she held the dewy globe with both hands, leaning forward, and sighed and shook her head, drooping at my pusillanimity. It was only when a ringlet had touched the rim, and perhaps the water  
(for a sunbeam on the surface could never have given it  
30 such a golden hue) that I took courage, clasped it, and exhausted it. Sweet as was the water, sweet as was the serenity it gave me—alas! that also which it moved away from me was sweet!

‘This time you can trust me alone,’ said she, and parted my hair, and kissed my brow. Again she went toward the

brook: again my agitation, my weakness, my doubt, came over me: nor could I see her while she raised the water, nor knew I whence she drew it. When she returned, she was close to me at once: she smiled: her smile pierced me to the bones: it seemed an angel's. She sprinkled the pure water on me; she looked most fondly; she took my hand; she suffered me to press hers to my bosom; but, whether by design I cannot tell, she let fall a few drops of the chilly element between.

'And now, O my beloved!' said she, 'we have consigned 10 to the bosom of God our earthly joys and sorrows. The joys cannot return, let not the sorrows. These alone would trouble my repose among the blessed.'

'Trouble thy repose! Fiametta! Give me the chalice!' cried I—'not a drop will I leave in it, not a drop.'

'Take it!' said that soft voice. 'O now most dear Giovanni! I know thou hast strength enough; and there is but little—at the bottom lies our first kiss.'

'Mine! didst thou say, beloved one? and is that left 20  
'thee still?'

'*Mine*,' said she, pensively; and as she abased her head, the broad leaf of the lily hid her brow and her eyes; the light of heaven shone through the flower.

'O Fiametta! Fiametta!' cried I in agony, 'God is the God of mercy, God is the God of love—can I, can I ever?' I struck the chalice against my head, unmindful that I held it; the water covered my face and my feet. I started up, not yet awake, and I heard the name of Fiametta in the curtains.

## THE DREAM OF PETRARCA

*The Pentameron* (1837)

WEARIED with the length of my walk over the mountains, 30 and finding a soft old molehill, covered with grey grass, by the way-side, I laid my head upon it, and slept. I cannot

tell how long it was before a species of dream or vision came over me.

Two beautiful youths appeared beside me; each was winged; but the wings were hanging down, and seemed ill adapted to flight. One of them, whose voice was the softest I ever heard, looking at me frequently, said to the other, 'He is under my guardianship for the present: do not awaken him with that feather.'

Methought, hearing the whisper, I saw something like  
10 the feather on an arrow; and then the arrow itself; the whole of it, even to the point; although he carried it in such a manner that it was difficult at first to discover more than a palm's length of it: the rest of the shaft, and the whole of the barb, was behind his ankles.

'This feather never awakens any one,' replied he, rather petulantly; 'but it brings more of confident security, and more of cherished dreams, than you without me are capable of imparting.'

'Be it so!' answered the gentler—'none is less inclined  
20 to quarrel or dispute than I am. Many whom you have wounded grievously, call upon me for succour. But so little am I disposed to thwart you, it is seldom I venture to do more for them than to whisper a few words of comfort in passing. How many reproaches on these occasions have been cast upon me for indifference and infidelity! Nearly as many, and nearly in the same terms, as upon you!'

'Odd enough that we, O Sleep! should be thought so alike!' said Love, contemptuously. 'Yonder is he who bears a nearer resemblance to you: the dullest have observed  
30 it.' I fancied I turned my eyes to where he was pointing, and saw at a distance the figure he designated. Meanwhile the contention went on uninterruptedly. Sleep was slow in asserting his power or his benefits. Love recapitulated them; but only that he might assert his own above them. Suddenly he called on me to decide, and to choose my patron. Under

the influence, first of the one, then of the other, I sprang from repose to rapture, I alighted from rapture on repose—and knew not which was sweetest. Love was very angry with me, and declared he would cross me throughout the whole of my existence. Whatever I might on other occasions have thought of his veracity, I now felt too surely the conviction that he would keep his word. At last, before the close of the altercation, the third Genius had advanced, and stood near us. I cannot tell how I knew him, but I knew him to be the Genius of Death. Breathless as I was at beholding him, I soon became familiar with his features. First they seemed only calm; presently they grew contemplative; and lastly beautiful: those of the Graces themselves are less regular, less harmonious, less composed. Love glanced at him unsteadily, with a countenance in which there was somewhat of anxiety, somewhat of disdain; and cried, ‘Go away! go away! nothing that thou touchest, lives.’

‘Say rather, child!’ replied the advancing form, and advancing grew loftier and statelier, ‘Say rather that nothing of beautiful or of glorious lives its own true life until my wing hath passed over it.’

Love pouted, and rumbled and bent down with his forefinger the stiff short feathers on his arrowhead; but replied not. Although he frowned worse than ever, and at me, I dreaded him less and less, and scarcely looked toward him. The milder and calmer Genius, the third, in proportion as I took courage to contemplate him, regarded me with more and more complacency. He held neither flower nor arrow, as the others did; but, throwing back the clusters of dark curls that overshadowed his countenance, he presented to me his hand, openly and benignly. I shrank on looking at him so near, and yet I sighed to love him. He smiled, not without an expression of pity, at perceiving my diffidence, my timidity: for I remembered how soft was the hand of



Sleep, how warm and entrancing was Love's. By degrees, I became ashamed of my ingratitude; and turning my face away, I held out my arms, and felt my neck within his. Composure strewed and allayed all the throbbings of my bosom; the coolness of freshest morning breathed around; the heavens seemed to open above me; while the beautiful cheek of my deliverer rested on my head. I would now have looked for those others; but knowing my intention by my gesture, he said consolatorily,

10 'Sleep is on his way to the Earth, where many are calling him; but it is not to these he hastens; for every call only makes him fly farther off. Sedately and gravely as he looks, he is nearly as capricious and volatile as the more arrogant and ferocious one.'

'And Love!' said I, 'whither is he departed? If not too late, I would propitiate and appease him.'

'He who cannot follow me, he who cannot overtake and pass me,' said the Genius, 'is unworthy of the name, the most glorious in earth or heaven. Look up! Love is yonder,  
20 and ready to receive thee.'

I looked: the earth was under me: I saw only the clear blue sky, and something brighter above it.

## WISDOM OF LIFE AND DEATH

i-v

*Imaginary Conversations* (1824)

i

*Quinctus Cicero.* There is something of softness, not unallied to sorrow, in these mild winter days and their humid sunshine.

*Marcus Tullius.* I know not, Quinctus, by what train or connexion of ideas they lead me rather to the past than to the future; unless it be that, when the fibres of our bodies are

relaxed, as they must be in such weather, the spirits fall back easily upon reflection, and are slowly incited to expectation. The memory of those great men who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valour, and protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly: they draw us after them, they place us with them. O Quinctus! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society; and what matter if the place of our reunion be not the Capitol or the Forum, be not Elysian meadows 10 or Atlantic islands? Locality has nothing to do with mind once free. Carry this thought perpetually with you; and Death, whether you believe it terminates our whole existence or otherwise, will lose, I will not say its terrors, for the brave and wise have none, but its anxieties and inquietudes.

ii

SLEEP, which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take 20 the illustration from their own fancy, that death like sleep may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. Pursuers as they are of pleasure, their unsettled and restless imagination loves rather to brood over an abyss, than to expatiate on places of amenity and composure. Just as sleep is the renovator of corporeal vigour, so, with their permission, I would believe death to be of the mind's; that the body, to which it is attached rather from habitude than from reason, is little else than a disease to our immortal spirit; and that, like the remora, 30 of which mariners tell marvels, it counteracts, as it were, both oar and sail, in the most strenuous advances we can make toward felicity. Shall we lament to feel this reptile

drop off? Or shall we not, on the contrary, leap with alacrity on shore, and offer up in gratitude to the Gods whatever is left about us uncorroded and unshattered? A broken and abject mind is the thing least worthy of their acceptance.

## iii

THERE is no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

## iv

10 EVERYTHING has its use; life to teach us the contempt of death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which among all things between stands eminently the principal, although it has been considered by some philosophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, and places them where they can best and most advantageously serve the commonwealth. Glory can be safely despised by those only who have fairly won it: a low, ignorant, or vicious man should dispute on  
20 other topics. The philosopher who contemns it has every rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive all others.

## v

Two things tend beyond all others, after philosophy, to inhibit and check our ruder passions as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our gentler in their proper play: and these two things are seasonable sorrow and inoffensive pleasure, each moderately indulged. Nay, there is also a pleasure, humble, it is true, but graceful and insinuating, which follows close upon our very sorrows, reconciles us to them gradually, and sometimes renders us at last undesirous  
30 altogether of abandoning them. If ever you have remem-

bered the anniversary of some day whereon a dear friend was lost to you, tell me whether that anniversary was not purer and even calmer than the day before. The sorrow, if there should be any left, is soon absorbed, and full satisfaction takes place of it, while you perform a pious office to Friendship, required and appointed by the ordinances of Nature.

vi-xi

*Imaginary Conversations* (1829)

vi

*Epicurus*. To me there is this advantage in a place at some distance from the city. Having by no means the full possession of my faculties where I hear unwelcome and intrusive 10 voices, or unexpected and irregular sounds that excite me involuntarily to listen, I assemble and arrange my thoughts with freedom and with pleasure in the fresh air and open sky; and they are more lively and vigorous and exuberant when I catch them as I walk about, and commune with them in silence and seclusion.

*Leontion*. It always has appeared to me that conversation brings them forth more readily and plenteously; and that the ideas of one person no sooner come out than another's follow them, whether from the same side or from the 20 opposite.

*Epicurus*. They do: but these are not the thoughts we keep for seed: they come up weak by coming up close together. In the country the mind is soothed and satisfied; here is no restraint of motion or of posture. These things, little and indifferent as they may seem, are not so: for the best tempers have need of ease and liberty, to keep them in right order long enough for the purposes of composition; and many a froward axiom, many an inhumane thought, hath arisen from sitting inconveniently, from hearing a few 30 unpleasant sounds, from the confinement of a gloomy

chamber, or from the want of symmetry in it. We are not aware of this, until we find an exemption from it in groves, on promontories, or along the sea-shore, or wherever else we meet Nature face to face, undisturbed and solitary.

## vii

CHILDREN are not men nor women: they are almost as different creatures, in many respects, as if they never were to be the one or the other: they are as unlike as buds are unlike flowers, and almost as blossoms are unlike fruits. Greatly are they better than they are about to be, unless  
 10 Philosophy raises her hand above them when the noon is coming on, and shelters them at one season from the heats that would scorch and wither, and at another from the storms that would shatter and subvert them.

## viii

*Epicurus.* Leontion knows not then how sweet and sacred idleness is.

*Leontion.* To render it sweet and sacred, the heart must have a little garden of its own, with its umbrage and fountains and perennial flowers; a careless company! Sleep is called sacred as well as sweet by Homer: and idleness is  
 20 but a step from it. The idleness of the wise and virtuous should be both, it being the repose and refreshment necessary for past exertions and for future. It punishes the bad man, it rewards the good: the Deities enjoy it, and Epicurus praises it.

## ix

THE great man is he who hath nothing to fear and nothing to hope from another. It is he who, while he demonstrates the iniquity of the laws, and is able to correct them, obeys them peaceably. It is he who looks on the ambitious both as weak and fraudulent. It is he who hath no disposition or

occasion for any kind of deceit, no reason for being or for appearing different from what he is. It is he who can call together the most select company when it pleases him.

## x

HUMAN life, if I may venture to speak fancifully in your presence, hath its equinoxes. In the vernal its flowers open under violent tempests: in the autumnal it is more exempt from gusts and storms, more regular, serene, and temperate, looks complacently on the fruits it has gathered, on the harvests it has reaped, and is not averse to the graces of order, to the avocations of literature, to the genial warmth of honest conviviality, and to the mild necessity of repose.

## xi

IF we could find a man exempt by nature from vices and infirmities, we should find one not worth knowing: he would also be void of tenderness and compassion. What allowances then could his best friends expect from him in their frailties? What help, consolation, and assistance, in their misfortunes? We are in the midst of a workshop well stored with sharp instruments: we may do ill with many, unless we take heed; and good with all, if we will but learn how to employ them.

20

## xii-xv

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

## xii

*Pericles.* Tears, O Aspasia, do not dwell long upon the cheeks of youth. Rain drops easily from the bud, rests on the bosom of the maturer flower, and breaks down that one only which hath lived its day.

## xiii

NAMES that lie upon the ground are not easily set on fire by the torch of Envy, but those quickly catch it which are

raised up by fame, or wave to the breeze of prosperity. Everyone that passes is ready to give them a shake and a rip; for there are few either so busy or so idle as not to lend a hand at undoing.

## xiv

It will appear wonderful and perhaps incredible to future generations, that what are now considered the two highest gifts of man, oratory and poetry, should be employed, the one chiefly in exciting, the other in emblazoning, deeds of slaughter and devastation. If we could see, in the nature of  
 10 things, a child capable of forming a live tiger, and found him exercising his power of doing it, I think we should say to him,

‘You might employ your time better, child!’

## xv

YOUTH, like the aloe, blossoms but once, and its flower springs from the midst of thorns: but see with what strength and to what height the aloe-flowers rise over them: be not surpassed by it.

## xvi

*The Pentameron (1837)*

THE nightingale is a lively bird to the young and joyous, a melancholy one to the declining and pensive. He has notes  
 20 for every ear; he has feelings for every bosom; and he exercises over gentle souls a wider and more welcome dominion than any other creature. If I must not offer you my thanks, for bringing to me such associations as the bedside of sickness is rarely in readiness to supply; if I must not declare to you how pleasant and well placed are your reflections on our condition; I may venture to remark on the nightingale, that our Italy is the only country where this bird is killed for the market. In no other is the race of Avarice and Gluttony so hard run. What a triumph for a

Florentine, to hold under his fork the most delightful being in all animated nature! the being to which every poet, or nearly every one, dedicates the first fruits of his labours. A cannibal who devours his enemy, through intolerable hunger, or what he holds as the measure of justice and of righteousness, revenge, may be viewed with less abhorrence than the heartless gormandiser, who casts upon his loaded stomach the little breast that has poured delight on thousands.

## xvii-xxi

*Imaginary Conversations (Works 1846)*

## xvii

GREATNESS is to goodness what gravel is to porphyry: the one is a moveable accumulation, swept along the surface of the earth; the other stands fixed and solid and alone, above the violence of war and of the tempest; above all that is residuous of a wasted world. Little men build up great ones; but the snow colossus soon melts: the good stand under the eye of God; and therefore stand.

## xviii

LET us love those that love us, and be contented to teach those that will hear us. Neither the voice nor the affections can extend beyond a contracted circle.

## xix

*Filippo Lippi.* While I continued in Barbary, although I was well treated, I often wished myself away, thinking of my friends in Florence, of music, of painting, or our villegiatura at the vintage-time, whether in the green and narrow glades of Pratolino, with lofty trees above us, and little rills unseen, and little bells about the necks of sheep and goats, tinkling together ambiguously; or amid the grey



quarries or under the majestic wall of ancient Fiesole; or down in the woods of the Doccia, where the cypresses are of such a girth that, when a youth stands against one of them, and a maiden stands opposite, and they clasp it, their hands at the time do little more than meet. Beautiful scenes, on which Heaven smiles eternally, how often has my heart ached for you! He who hath lived in this country, can enjoy no distant one. He breathes here another air; he lives more life; a brighter sun invigorates his studies, and serener stars  
 10 influence his repose. Barbary hath also the blessing of climate; and although I do not desire to be there again, I feel sometimes a kind of regret at leaving it. A bell warbles the more mellifluously in the air when the sound of the stroke is over, and when another swims out from underneath it, and pants upon the element that gave it birth. In like manner the recollection of a thing is frequently more pleasing than the actuality; what is harsh is dropped in the space between.

## XX

*Aesop.* Breathe, Rhodope, breathe again those painless  
 20 sighs: they belong to thy vernal season. May thy summer of life be calm, thy autumn calmer, and thy winter never come.

*Rhodope.* I must die then earlier.

*Aesop.* Laodameia died; Helen died; Leda, the beloved of Jupiter, went before. It is better to repose in the earth betimes than to sit up late; better, than to cling pertinaciously to what we feel crumbling under us, and to protract an inevitable fall. We may enjoy the present while we are  
 30 insensible of infirmity and decay: but the present, like a note in music, is nothing but as it appertains to what is past and what is to come. There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave: there are no voices, O Rhodope! that are not soon mute, however tuneful; there is no name, with

whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.

## xxi

*Vittoria Colonna.* There are various kinds of greatness, as we all know; however, the most part of those who profess one species is ready to acknowledge no other. The first and chief is intellectual. But surely those also are to be admitted into the number of the eminently great, who move large masses by action, by throwing their own ardent minds into the midst of popular assemblies or conflicting armies, compelling, directing, and subjecting. This greatness is 10 indeed far from so desirable as that which shines serenely from above, to be our hope, comfort, and guidance; to lead us in spirit from a world of sad realities into one fresh from the poet's hand, and blooming with all the variety of his creation. Hence the most successful generals, and the most powerful kings, will always be considered by the judicious and dispassionate as invested with less dignity, less extensive and enduring authority, than great philosophers and great poets.

*Michelangelo.* By the wise indeed; but little men, like 20 little birds, are attracted and caught by false lights.

## xxii

*Imaginary Conversations (Works 1876)*

WILL there never be a time when every mother will be the priestess of her children and family? Our duties are simple and learnt easily. No sunrise but awakens one or other of them into activity and growth. Boys are educated, girls are not; yet girls should be educated first, and taught the most impressively. These slender and graceful columns are not only the ornament, but also the support, of society. Men are the braver for the reverence they bear toward them, and in them do they find their reward.

## ON LITERATURE

i-iv

*Imaginary Conversations* (1824)

i

*Porson.* You poets are still rather too fond of the unsubstantial. Some will have nothing else than what they call pure imagination. Now, air-plants ought not to fill the whole conservatory; other plants, I would modestly suggest, are worth cultivating, which send their roots pretty deep into the ground. I hate both poetry and wine without body. Look at Shakespeare, Bacon, and Milton; were these your pure-imagination men? The least of 'them, whichever it was, carried a jewel of poetry about him worth all his  
 10 tribe that came after. Did the two of them who wrote in verse build upon nothing? Did their predecessors? And pray whose daughter was the muse they invoked? Why! Memory's. They stood among substantial men and sang upon recorded actions. The plain of Scamander, the promontory of Sigeum, the palaces of Tros and Dardanus, the citadel in which the Fates sang mournfully under the image of Minerva, seem fitter places for the Muses to alight on than artificial rockwork or than faery-rings. But your great favourite, I hear, is Spenser, who shines in allegory,  
 20 and who, like an aerolith, is dull and heavy when he descends to the ground.

*Southey.* He continues a great favourite with me still, although he must always lose a little as our youth declines. Spenser's is a spacious but somewhat low chamber, hung with rich tapestry, on which the figures are mostly disproportioned, but some of the faces are lively and beautiful; the furniture is part creaky and worm-eaten, part fragrant with cedar and sandal-wood and aromatic gums and balsams; every table and mantelpiece and cabinet is covered with  
 30 gorgeous vases, and birds, and dragons, and houses in the air.

## ii

CLEAR writers, like clear fountains, do not seem so deep as they are: the turbid look most profound.

## iii

OF all studies the most delightful and the most useful is biography. The seeds of great events lie near the surface; historians delve too deep for them. No history was ever true: lives I have read which, if they were not, had the appearance, the interest, and the utility of truth.

## iv

*Abbé Delille.* Milton is indeed extremely difficult to translate; for, however noble and majestic, he is sometimes heavy, and often rough and unequal.

10

*Landor.* Dear Abbé! porphyry is heavy, gold is heavier; Ossa and Olympus are rough and unequal; the steppes of Tartary, though high, are of uniform elevation: there is not a rock, nor a birch, nor a cytusus, nor an arbutus, upon them, great enough to shelter a new-dropt lamb. Level the Alps one with another, and where is their sublimity? Raise up the vale of Tempe to the downs above, and where are those sylvan creeks and harbours in which the imagination watches while the soul reposes; those recesses in which the Gods partook the weaknesses of mortals, and mortals the 20 enjoyments of the Gods!

## v, vi

*Imaginary Conversations* (1829)

## v

IF what is occult must be occult for ever, why throw away words about it? Employ on every occasion the simplest and easiest, and range them in the most natural order. Thus they will serve thee faithfully, bringing thee many hearers and readers from the intellectual and uncorrupted. All popular orators, victorious commanders, crowned historians, and poets above crowning, have done it.

## vi

Do not fear to be less rich in the productions of your mind at one season than at another. Marshes are always marshes, and pools are pools; but the sea, in those places where we admire it most, is sometimes sea and sometimes dry land; sometimes it brings ships into port, and sometimes it leaves them where they can be refitted and equipt. The capacious mind neither rises nor sinks, neither labours nor rests, in vain. Even in those intervals when it loses the consciousness of its powers, when it swims as it were in vacuity, and feels  
 10 not what is external nor internal, it acquires or recovers strength, as the body does by sleep. Never try to say things admirably; try only to say them plainly; for your business is with the considerate philosopher, and not with the polemical assembly.

## vii, viii

*Pericles and Aspasia* (1836)

## vii

*Cleone.* Aspasia! I foresee that henceforward you will admire the tragedy of Prometheus more than ever. But do not tell anyone, excepting so fond a friend as Cleone, that you prefer the author to Homer. I agree with you that the conception of such a drama is in itself a stupendous effort of  
 20 genius; that the execution is equal to the conception; that the character of Prometheus is more heroic than any in heroic poetry; and that no production of the same extent is so magnificent and so exalted. But the Iliad is not a region; it is a continent; and you might as well compare this prodigy to it as the cataract of the Nile to the Ocean. In the one we are overpowered by the compression and burst of the element: in the other we are carried over an immensity of space, bounding the earth, not bounded by her, and having nothing above but the heavens.

## viii

THE field of History should not merely be well tilled, but well peopled. None is delightful to me, or interesting, in which I find not as many illustrious names as have a right to enter it. We might as well in a drama place the actors behind the scenes, and listen to the dialogue there, as in a history push valiant men back, and protrude ourselves with husky disputations. Show me rather how great projects were executed, great advantages gained, and great calamities averted. Show me the generals and the statesmen who stood foremost, that I may bend to them in reverence; tell me their names, that I may repeat them to my children. Teach me whence laws were introduced, upon what foundation laid, by what custody guarded, in what inner keep preserved. Let the books of the treasury lie closed as religiously as the Sibyl's; leave weights and measures in the market-place, Commerce in the harbour, the Arts in the light they love, Philosophy in the shade: place History on her rightful throne, and, at the sides of her, Eloquence and War.

## ix-xiii

*The Pentameron* (1837)

## ix

No advice is less necessary to you, than the advice to express your meaning as clearly as you can. Where the purpose of glass is to be seen through, we do not want it tinted nor wavy. In certain kinds of poetry the case may be slightly different; such, for instance, as are intended to display the powers of association and combination in the writer, and to invite and exercise the compass and comprehension of the intelligent. Pindar and the Attic tragedians wrote in this manner, and rendered the minds of their audience more alert and ready and capacious. They found some fit for them, and made others. Great painters have

always the same task to perform. What is excellent in their art can not be thought excellent by many, even of those who reason well on ordinary matters, and see clearly beauties elsewhere. All correct perceptions are the effect of careful practice. We little doubt that a mirror would direct us in the most familiar of our features, and that our hand would follow its guidance, until we try to cut a lock of our hair. We have no such criterion to demonstrate our liability to error in judging of poetry; a quality so rare that perhaps no five contemporaries ever were masters of it.

## x

THE great poet, like the original man of the Platonists, is double, possessing the further advantage of being able to drop one half at his option, and to resume it. Some of the tenderest on paper have no sympathies beyond; and some of the austerest in their intercourse with their fellow-creatures, have deluged the world with tears. It is not from the rose that the bee gathers her honey, but often from the most acrid and the most bitter leaves and petals.

## xi

A GOOD tragedy shows us that greater men than ourselves have suffered more severely and more unjustly; that the highest human power hath suddenly fallen helpless and extinct; or, what is better to contemplate and usefuller to know, that uncontrolled by law, unaccompanied by virtue, unfollowed by contentment, its possession is undesirable and unsafe. Sometimes we go away in triumph with Affliction proved and purified, and leave her under the smiles of heaven. In all these consummations the object is excellent; and here is the highest point to which poetry can attain. Tragedy has no bye-paths, no resting-places; there is everywhere action and passion.

## xii

WE may write little things well, and accumulate one upon another; but never will any be justly called a great poet unless he has treated a great subject worthily. He may be the poet of the lover and of the idler, he may be the poet of green fields or gay society; but whoever is this can be no more. A throne is not built of birds'-nests, nor do a thousand reeds make a trumpet.

## xiii

A GREAT poet may really borrow: he may even condescend to an obligation at the hand of an equal or inferior: but he forfeits his title if he borrows more than the amount of his 10 own possessions. The nightingale himself takes somewhat of his song from birds less glorified: and the lark, having beaten with her wing the very gates of heaven, cools her breast among the grass. The lowlier of intellect may lay out a table in their field, at which table the highest one shall sometimes be disposed to partake: want does not compel him. Imitation, as we call it, is often weakness, but it likewise is often sympathy.

## xiv

*Foreign Quarterly Review* (1842)

THERE are four things requisite to constitute might, majesty, and dominion, in a poet: these are creativeness, construc- 20 tiveness, the sublime, the pathetic. A poet of the first order must have formed, or taken to himself and modified, some great subject. He must be creative and constructive. Creativeness may work upon old materials; a new world may spring from an old one. Shakespeare found Hamlet and Ophelia; he found Othello and Desdemona; nevertheless he, the only universal poet, carried this, and all the other qualifications, far beyond the reach of competitors. He was creative and constructive, he was sublime and



pathetic, and he has also in his humanity condescended to the familiar and the comic. There is nothing less pleasant than the smile of Milton; but at one time Momus, at another the Graces, hang upon the neck of Shakespeare.

## xv

*Imaginary Conversations (Works 1846)*

GOOD prose, to say nothing of the original thoughts it conveys, may be infinitely varied in modulation. It is only an extension of metres, an amplification of harmonies, of which even the best and most varied poetry admits but few. Comprehending at once the prose and poetry of Milton, we could  
 10 prove, before 'fit audience,' that he is incomparably the greatest master of harmony that ever lived.

## xvi, xvii

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree (1853)*

## xvi

WHEREVER there is a word beyond what is requisite to express the meaning, that word must be peculiarly beautiful in itself, or strikingly harmonious; either of which qualities may be of some service in fixing the attention and enforcing the sentiment. But the proper word in the proper place seldom leaves anything to be desiderated on the score of harmony. The beauty of health and strength is more attractive and impressive than any beauty conferred by  
 20 ornament.

## xvii

IN Wordsworth's poetry there is as much of prose as there is of poetry in the prose of Milton. But prose on certain occasions can bear a great deal of poetry: on the other hand, poetry sinks and swoons under a moderate weight of prose.

## xviii

1855. *Letter in Life* (1869)

SHAKESPEARE! who can speak of him? Antiquity fades away before him, and even Homer is but a shadow.

## ON HIMSELF

## i

*Imaginary Conversations* (1824)

ALAS! my writings are not upon slate: no finger, not of Time himself, who dips it in the clouds of years and in the storm and tempest, can efface the written.

## ii

*Imaginary Conversations* (1828)

I DO not assert that my grief remains for days, or even hours together, violent or unremitted, although it has done so once or twice: but seldom have I thought of a friend or companion, be it at the distance of thirty or forty years, that the thought is not as intense and painful, and of as long a visitation, as it was at first. Even those with whom I have not lived, and whom indeed I have never seen, affect me by sympathy, as though I had known them intimately, and I hold with them in my walks many imaginary conversations. If anything could engage me to visit Rome, to endure the sight of her scarred and awful ruins, telling their grave stories upon the ground in the midst of eunuchs and fiddlers; if I could let charnel-houses and opera-houses, consuls and popes, tribunes and cardinals, orators and preachers, clash in my mind, it would be that I might afterwards spend an hour in solitude where the pyramid of Cestius points to the bones of Keats and Shelley. Nothing so attracts my heart as ruins in deserts, or so repels it as ruins in the circle of fashion. What is so shocking as the

hard verity of Death swept by the rustling masquerade of Life! and does not Mortality of herself teach us how little we are, without placing us amidst the trivialities of patch-work pomp, where Virgil led the gods to found an empire, where Cicero saved and Cæsar shook the world!

## iii

*Letter to An Author (Pericles and Aspasia, 1836)*

I AM radically a Conservative in everything useful; and during my stay at this inn called Human Life, I would trust anything to the chambermaids rather than my English tongue.

## iv

*Imaginary Conversations (Works 1846)*

10 FROM my earliest days I have avoided society as much as I could decorously, for I received more pleasure in the cultivation and improvement of my own thoughts than in walking up and down among the thoughts of others. Yet, as you know, I never have avoided the intercourse of men distinguished by virtue and genius; of genius, because it warmed and invigorated me by my trying to keep pace with it; of virtue, that if I had any of my own it might be called forth by such vicinity.

## v

1850. *Letter in Life (1869)*

20 HERE I stand, brought to life by a dead man. Few people would ever have known I had written poetry, if Southey had not given his word that a sort of poetry it really and truly was. I must have waited until Pindar and Aeschylus had taken me between them, and until Milton had said, 'Commonwealth's man, we meet at last'. Well, I would rather meet him and Southey hereafter than any of them; though I know he will ask me why I have done so little.

My answer will be, Because I wrote chiefly to occupy the vacant hour, caring not a straw for popularity, and little more for fame.

vi, vii

*Last Fruit Off an Old Tree* (1853)

vi

It has been my fortune and felicity, from my earliest days, to have avoided all competitions. My tutor at Oxford could never persuade me to write a piece of Latin poetry for the Prize, earnest as he was that his pupil should be a winner at the forthcoming *Encœnia*. Poetry was always my amusement, prose my study and business. I have published five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations*: cut the worst of them 10 through the middle, and there will remain in this decimal fraction quite enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select.

vii

I CLAIM no place in the world of letters; I am alone, and will be alone, as long as I live, and after.

## NOTES

PAGE 2. TAMAR'S WRESTLING. This is an episode from the long poem of *Gebir*, based upon the story of Charoba, which Landor found in Clara Reeve's *The Progress of Romance* (1785). Tamar is the younger brother of Gebir, a shepherd. His narrative explains why a sheep is missing from his flock. *Gebir* was written, largely in Latin, during a visit to Wales in 1794. For a time Landor lost the manuscript (*vide* the lines from his APOLOGY FOR GEBIR, p. 43), but recovered it and revised it in English at Swansea in 1797-8. The poem early attracted the attention of other poets. Southey reviewed it in *The Critical Review*, and took it with him to Lisbon in 1800. From there he wrote to Coleridge, 'Read *Gebir* again: he grows upon me.' Coleridge himself had been interested in 'the Gebir-man' by October 1799, but could learn nothing of the writer. Charles Lamb, too, was interested, but perplexed. 'I have seen Gebor! Gebor aptly so denominated from Geborish, *quasi* Gibberish. But Gebor hath some lucid intervals.' Many years later, Crabb Robinson wrote to Landor, 'I find your poems lying open before Lamb. Both tipsy and sober he is ever muttering ROSE AYLMER (*vide* p. 59). But it is not these lines only that have a curious fascination for him. He is always turning to *Gebir* for things that haunt him in the same way.'

PAGE 2. l. 11. *A nymph*. In Greek mythology nymphs were personifications of natural features, such as waters, trees, mountains. They sing and dance, but are not immortal. Those of waters were called Naiads, those of trees Dryads or Hama-dryads, those of mountains Oreads.

PAGE 3. ll. 44-51. For Landor's belief that Wordsworth plagiarized this passage in the *Excursion*, *vide* Introduction, p. xi.

PAGE 3. l. 54. Neptune was an Italian sea-god, later identified with the Greek Poseidon.

PAGE 5. ENALLOS AND CYMODAMEIA. For this story Landor found a source in Greek writers, but he seems to have substituted Lemnos for Lesbos. Both are islands in the Aegean Sea, between Greece and Asia Minor, on the coast of which Lycia is a district. Pindus (l. 72) is a mountain range between Thessaly and Epirus in the north-west of Greece. Apollo, also called Phoebus, was son of Zeus and Leto, and god of the sun, music and prophecy; Neptune (l. 90), an Italian sea-god, identified with Poseidon.

PAGE 10. TO CORINTH. Theseus was a legendary King of Athens, who slew the brigand Sciron near Megara, and was the reputed founder of the athletic and equine contests held biennially on the Isthmus of Corinth. Jason led the voyage of the Argonauts to Colchis on the Euxine, now the Black Sea, where he fell in love with the King's daughter Medea. They went to Corinth, where he deserted her, and she in revenge killed her children by him. It is the subject of a tragedy by Euripides. The Eumenides were the winged spirits, who avenged crimes against kinship.

PAGE 11. CORINNA TO TANAGRA. Landor's *Pericles and Aspasia* is mainly a collection of prose letters and speeches by Athenian and other characters of the fifth century B.C. (*vide* note to p. 132). But he introduced much poetry of his own into it, which he sometimes, as in this and the following poem, ascribed to known Greek writers. Corinna (6th cent. B.C.) was a poetess of either Tanagra or Thebes in Boeotia, and was said to have instructed Pindar in the art of song. Thermodon was a river at Pontus in Asia Minor, near the Euxine, now the Black Sea. Landor seems to have thought that it was in Boeotia. Latona is the Latin form of Leto, and her son was Apollo. The Delphic bays (l. 40) are the rewards of poets, because Apollo, who had his shrine at Delphi, on Mt. Parnassus in Phœcis, was the god of song. Dirce was a fountain near Thebes, named after a queen of Thebes, who was tied to the horns of a bull, and dragged to death, in return for her cruelty to a rival.

PAGE 13. VERSES OF MIMNERMUS. Mimnermus (7th cent. B.C.) was an elegiac poet of Colophon, near Ephesus in Asia Minor. Thasos, Naxos, Samos are islands in the Aegean Sea, between Asia Minor and Greece. Lydia is the central district of the coast of Asia Minor. Priapus was a god of fertility in gardens and herbs. The cult of him came from Asia Minor.

PAGE 13. THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA. Artemidora may be an invention of Landor's own, but he has given her as a lover Elpenor, a companion of Odysseus, who fell off the roof of Circe's house, when drunk, and whom Odysseus later met in Hades.

PAGE 14. IPHIGENEIA. When the Greeks, under Agamemnon, were starting for the siege of Troy, they were weather-bound at Aulis, a harbour of Boeotia. The seer Calchas declared that the goddess Artemis required the sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter Iphigeneia, before she would allow the fleet to sail. Agamemnon gave reluctant consent, but Artemis took the damsel to be her priestess in the land of the Tauri, now the

Crimea. Euripides wrote both an *Iphigeneia in Aulis* and an *Iphigeneia in Tauris* on the legend, but only the former is preserved. An earlier poem by Landor on the same theme, *The Shades of Agamemnon and of Iphigeneia*, is in dialogue, and it is probably this to which he refers in the lines printed on page 43 from his *Satire on Satirists*. Hymen (l. 35) was the son of Apollo, and a god of marriage.

PAGE 15. ON TERNISSA'S DEATH. Ternissa is a character in Landor's own *Imaginary Conversation* between Epicurus and his pupils Leontion and Ternissa.

PAGE 16. A FRIEND TO THEOCRITOS IN EGYPT. Theocritus (c 270 B.C.), whose *Idylls* include pastoral poems, was born at Syracuse in Sicily and spent part of his life at Alexandria in Egypt. Pan was a god of flocks and shepherds. He loved the nymph Pitys, who, when she fled from him was turned into a pine-tree. Landor wrote a separate poem on her story, which is not included in this selection.

PAGE 17. HELLAS. Ilissus is a stream near Athens. For Dirce, *vide* note on CORINNA TO TANAGRA (p. 11).

PAGE 18. REGENERATION. This is only the opening of a poem on the subjection of Italy to Austria and the Greek struggle for independence from Turkey in 1824.

PAGE 19. ON WAR. The war was that between Athens and the Aegean island of Samos in 440 B.C., *vide* the ORATION OF PERICLES (p. 132).

PAGE 19. IRELAND. Tara is a hill in County Meath, where the ancient Kings of Ireland were enthroned. St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland.

PAGE 20. WALTER TYRREL AND WILLIAM RUFUS. William II was shot to death by an arrow in the New Forest on 2 August 1100. Walter Tirl of Poix was suspected, but no proof was forthcoming. Landor has added the Bishop of Winchester. The see was in fact vacant at the time.

PAGE 26. WISDOM OF LIFE AND DEATH. i. Some hair, believed to be that of Lucretia Borgia, is preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. She was the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, and in 1502 married Alfonso of Este, Prince of Ferrara. The stories of her wickedness as a poisoner may be exaggerated.

PAGE 26. WISDOM. ii. For Dirce cf. note on CORINNA (p. 11).

PAGE 28. WISDOM. viii. In his *Conversation* between Walton, Cotton, and Oldways, Landor chose to ascribe his lines to the poet John Donne (1573-1631).

PAGE 28. WISDOM. ix. Lethe ('oblivion') was a river in Hades, where dead souls drank to forget their past.

PAGE 31. ON SWIFT JOINING AVON NEAR RUGBY. On Fiesole

*vide* the notes to MY HOMES (p. 33). It is not quite clear what the link in Landor's mind between Torquato Tasso (the Italian poet) and Milton was, perhaps merely that Tasso wrote a *Sette Giornate della Creazione*, and Milton, later than *Lycidas*, his *Paradise Lost*. *Latian feet* (l. 17) is a poetical way of saying 'Latin verses'. Rome was in Latium. The reference (l. 38) to one who bore the name of Swift, is to Ianthe (*vide* Introduction). The Maenads (l. 47) were ecstatic female votaries of Dionysus, a Thracian deity of vegetation, wine, music and poetry, the cult of whom made its way into Greece. The reformer John Wycliffe (l. 52) was buried at Lutterworth, but in 1428 his ashes were disinterred, and thrown into the Swift.

PAGE 32. IPSLEY. *Vide* Introduction.

PAGE 33. MY HOMES. The Arrow (l. 2) is a stream which runs by Ipsley. For Landor's visit to Paris (1802), his attempt (1809-13) to settle at Llanthony, his stay at Tours (1814-15), and his residence in the Palazzo Medici (1821-5) *vide* Introduction and Life. Pierre de Ronsard (l. 8) was a French poet (1524-85) and Pierre Jean de Beranger (l. 9) a much later one (1780-1857). The Lares (l. 14), in Roman mythology, were spirits of the domestic household. The Villa Gherardesca, Landor's home from 1824 to 1835, lay on the road from Florence (2 miles away) to the hill town of San Domenico di Fiesole ( $\frac{3}{4}$  mile). The streams of Affrico and Mensola met in its garden. Here too was a lake in which the *bella brigada* (l. 23) of Boccaccio's ladies bathed, when they had finished the stories recorded in his *Decameron* (*vide* note to p. 142). A terrace led to the gate, from which were visible Florence on the Arno, with its Duomo and Giotto's tower, the glades of Valdarno and Vallombrosa, the weir of Rovezzano, the house of Dante on the Mugnone, the village of Maiano and that of Settignano, where Michael Angelo was born, and higher up the convent of the Doccia, set in cypresses.

PAGE 34. A SISTER'S DEATH. Elizabeth Landor died in 1854.

PAGES 36, 37. THE FIESOLAN VILLA, and FAREWELL TO ITALY. For the places named *vide* note on MY HOMES (p. 33, *supra*).

PAGE 38. TO MY CHILD CARLINO. Charles Landor was born in 1825. Cincirillo (l. 19) was a cat; Cupid (l. 54) the Latin name for the Greek Eros, god of love, son of Aphrodite; Pan (l. 55) a Greek god of flocks and shepherds, worshipped in Arcadia; Calypso (l. 58) a nymph who delayed Odysseus for seven years in the island Ogygia on his way home from the siege of Troy.

PAGE 40. LINES ON TORQUAY. Liguria is the coastal area of



North Italy, with Genoa as its chief town. Sorrento and Amalfi are on the coast near Naples, which now occupies the site of Parthenope, a Greek settlement, named from one of the Sirens, mythical women of the sea who drew men to destruction by their song. Odysseus, on his return from Troy, escaped them by tying himself to a mast, and making his sailors put wax in their ears. The annoyed Sirens drowned themselves, and Parthenope was washed ashore in Italy. He who 'left our fathers free' was William of Orange, afterwards William III, who sailed, not strictly from the Zuyderzee in the north of Holland, but from Helvoetsluys in the west, and landed at Brixham on the south of Torbay. Landor visited Naples in 1827. Raffaello Santi (1403-1520) was an Italian painter. C. M. von Weber (1786-1826) wrote the *sing-spiel Oberon* (1826).

PAGE 41. TO MY DAUGHTER. Julia Landor was born at Pisa on the Arno. Count Ugolino ate the bodies of his children, who had died, while imprisoned with him. Dante saw him in hell (*Inferno* xxxiii. 109 sqq.).

PAGE 42. INGRATITUDE. The ungrateful one was Landor's son Arnold, to whom he had made over what remained of his property, when he left England in 1858. Raffael, Correggio, and Salvator Rosa were painters, whose pictures, or what he believed to be their pictures, he had collected.

PAGE 43. APOLOGY FOR GEBIR. *Vide* note on Gebir (p. 2). Fidler was a Welsh pony. Tawey is the river at Swansea, also called Abertawey.

PAGE 43. HIS WRITINGS. xiv. *Vide* note on IPHIGENEIA (p. 14).

PAGE 45. HIS WRITINGS. xviii. On Ilissus, *vide* note on HELLAS (p. 17).

PAGE 47. ANTICIPATIONS OF DEATH, xxi. Landor seems to have contemplated the churchyard of Widcombe, on the border of Bath, as the place for his grave, as early as 1801 or 1802, when he first met Sophia Jane Swift, the Ianthe of his verse (*vide* Introduction and Life, and the poems on pp. 51-9). On 8 Sept. 1858 he wrote to Mrs. Graves-Sawle 'Perhaps in your walks you may take the road to Widcombe. There I intend to be buried. Such was my promise in my early days to one who could not make the same, but whose last words pronounced my name with faithful and fond remembrance.' So, too, he wrote to Browning on 23 November 1861 that the spot was 'fixt upon sixty years ago by a lady who loved me to her last hour'. But while at Villa Gherardesca in 1830 he changed his mind, and resolved to be buried in his own garden. 'I have four mimosas', he told

John Forster, 'ready to place round my intended tomb, and a friend who is coming to plant them.' This was clearly Ianthe, then in Florence. After his final flight from the Villa in 1859, he reverted to his earlier plan. By 1861 a plot at Widcombe had been reserved for him, but there were the expenses of conveying his body and making the grave to be met. Arnold, his heir, would not help him, but his younger sons would. Finally, however, he gave up the project, and resolved to be buried at Florence, where in fact he lies.

PAGE 50. ANTICIPATIONS OF DEATH. xxxi. For Rose, *vide* pp. 60-5.

PAGES 51-9. IANTHE. On Sophia Jane Swift, whom Landor called Ianthe, *vide* Introduction. A few of the poems in this group are taken as related to her by conjecture only.

PAGE 51. IANTHE. iii. Helen, in Greek mythology, was the daughter of Zeus, and wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, whose abduction by Paris, son of Priam, King of Ilion, which is Troy, led to the siege, told of by Homer in the *Iliad*. Alcestis was the wife of Admetus, King of Phærae, who undertook to die in place of her husband. But Heracles recovered her from the messenger of Hades. It is the subject of a tragedy by Euripides (438 B.C.).

PAGE 52. IANTHE. iv. This may refer either to a journey of Ianthe for her marriage (1803) in Ireland, whither Landor had an idea of following her, or to that to Vienna (IANTHE, vi).

PAGE 53. IANTHE. vi. The portrait of Landor by William Fisher is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

PAGE 58. IANTHE. xxiii, xxiv. Ianthe died at Versailles on 31 July 1851. On 3 August Landor wrote to John Forster, 'I hoped she might have seen my grave. Hers I shall never see, but my thoughts will visit it often. Though other friends have died in other days (why cannot I help this running into verse?).'

PAGE 58. IANTHE. xxv. This again was anticipated in a letter of 8 April 1854 to Forster. 'This evening I took my usual walk a little earlier, and sitting afterwards without candles for about an hour as I always do, I watched the twilight darken on my walls and my pictures vanish from before me.' Landor was an assiduous collector of pictures, but he had no critical faculty in art, and many of them appear to have been very bad. He liked to give pictures to his friends. Swinburne recorded that, during his visit of 1864 Landor took down an alleged Correggio from the wall and presented it to him, and when he hesitated to accept it, 'turning purple with anger, shouted, "By God, Sir, you shall"'.

PAGE 59. ROSE AYLMEYER. i-iii. Rose Whitworth Aylmer

(n. 1779) was the daughter of the 4th Lord Aylmer. Landor met her in 1798, or possibly 1797, at Swansea (the Abertawy of iii) apparently with her younger half-sister, who married D. M. Paynter, and was the mother of Landor's Rose the Second (p. 60). She went to Calcutta with her aunt, the wife of Sir Henry Russell, an Indian judge, and died there suddenly on 2 March 1800. Mrs. Paynter gave Landor a lock of her hair, which was found in his desk after his death. In 1853 he sent Mrs. Paynter the lines here given as i, with the comment that they were the only ones he wrote about her, until he heard, two years later, of her end.

PAGES 60-5. ROSE THE SECOND. i-xiii. Landor first met Rose Caroline Paynter, when she came with her mother to Florence, in 1835. Later he saw much of her at Bath from 1838 onwards and wrote her many charming letters, which show him at his best. In 1846 she married (viii) Charles Brune Graves-Sawle, later a Baronet, and Landor visited them in their house below the ruined castle of Restormel (x, xi), near Lostwithiel on the Fowey estuary in Cornwall. Rose's portrait by William Fisher (vi) was engraved for the *Book of Beauty* with Landor's lines. The plays dedicated to her (iii) form parts of a dramatic trilogy by Landor on Neapolitan history during the 14th century, which was never acted. Amalfi and Sorrento are on the west coast of Italy, south of Naples. Chantilly (iv) is to the north of Paris. Molandé is Ianthé (*vide* Introduction). It is possible that (v) may have been written to her, rather than Rose, but it may also refer to the Chantilly visit. Francesco Petrarca (n. 1304) met the Laura of his verse at Avignon in the Vaucluse district of southern France.

PAGE 65. THE THREE ROSES. They are Rose Aylmer, with whom Landor walked to Britonferry from Swansea, Rose Paynter, and her daughter, also a Rose.

PAGE 66. ISABELLA PERCY. She was a daughter of Lord Charles Percy, of Guy's Cliffe, near Warwick.

PAGE 66. LADY BLESSINGTON. Marguerite Power, an Irish widow, married Charles, Earl of Blessington in 1818. Landor met them when they visited Florence in 1827, and went to Naples with them. The Earl died in 1829. She was a literary lady, edited the *Book of Beauty* from 1834, and *The Keepsake* from 1841. In 1836 she took Gore House, Kensington, which Landor made his head-quarters when in London. She died in 1849, and was buried at Chambourcy, near St. Germain-en-Laye (l. 24), to the north-west of Paris. The 'man-queen' (l. 20) was Elizabeth, the 'nobler soul' Oliver Cromwell.

PAGE 68. ELIZABETH ARUNDELL. She was the daughter of Joseph Esdaile, and married Henry Arundell, son of Lord Arundell of Wardour in 1832. Her friends in Bath called her the 'white violet'.

PAGE 68. ON BOOKS AND WRITERS. For Landor's relations with Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, and Browning, *vide* Introduction.

PAGE 68. ON A POET IN A WELSH CHURCHYARD. The poet may be Henry Vaughan (1622-95), buried at Llansaintffraed in Brecknockshire.

PAGE 69. TO WORDSWORTH. The 'Dardan strand' (l. 46) was that of Troy, of which Dardanus was the mythical founder. Laodamia (l. 48) was the wife of Protesilaus, killed at the first landing of the Greeks. The gods allowed him to return to her for three hours, at the end of which she killed herself. Wordsworth wrote a poem on the subject. Landor presumably compares Dryden to Francis Bacon (l. 58) because of his learning. For the story of Troy, *vide* note on PELEUS AND THETIS (p. 126).

PAGE 70. TO SOUTHEY. Homer (l. 8) wrote the epics *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, probably in the ninth century B.C. Alcinous (l. 11), in the *Odyssey*, is King of the fabulous Thracians of Scheria. The Theban (l. 19) is the lyricist Pindar (c. 522-442 B.C.).

PAGE 72. TO THE RIVER AVON. The Avon flows by Stratford in Warwickshire, where Shakespeare was born and is buried. Padus (l. 8) was the Roman name for the river Po in north Italy. It was identified by poets with the fabulous Eridanus where Phaethon, attempting to drive the chariot of his father Helios, the sun-god, received a 'fiery wound' from the thunderbolt of Zeus. On Tiber (l. 9) stands Rome.

PAGE 73. iv. *With frowning brow*. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) wrote *La Vita Nuova* and *La Divina Commedia*. On the tower of Babel (l. 10), so called because 'the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth', *vide* *Genesis* xi. 1-9.

PAGE 73. v. *That critic*. Ben is Benjamin Jonson. Waller (l. 8) is the poet Edmund Waller (1606-87).

PAGES 76-7. ON SOUTHEY. i. Helvellyn (l. 4) is a mountain in the Lake country, between Keswick, where Southey lived, and Ambleside. The river Derwent (l. 5) flows by Keswick, the Arno by Florence. For 'the Delphic throne' *vide* note on CORINNA (p. 11). Hiero (l. 55) was King of Syracuse (478-469 B.C.).

ON SOUTHEY. ii. 'Death's brother' (l. 5) in Greek mythology was Sleep. Alighieri (l. 20) was Dante (*vide* note on p. 73). Landor met Southey at Bristol, close to Clifton (l. 32), in

1808. They were together at Como, north of Milan, in 1817. Lario (l. 35) is another name for the lake of Como, on which is Bellagio. Southey's son Herbert (l. 40) had died in 1816.

PAGE 78. ON WORDSWORTH. i. These lines have been ascribed to Landor's first meeting with Wordsworth in 1832, but it is clear from a facsimile in F. V. Morley, *Dora Wordsworth, Her Book* (1924), that they were written at the Temple in London on 15 May 1836, just before Landor's break with Wordsworth.

PAGE 78. A SATIRE ON SATIRISTS. The 'pilewort' (l. 3) is the plant known as the lesser celandine, on which Wordsworth had written in 1802

There 's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the lesser Celandine.

It is an aspiration which gardeners do not share. Wordsworth wrote, too, a well-known poem *To the Cuckoo* (l. 5), and a series of sonnets on the Duddon, a river in Cumberland (l. 4). Henry Phillpotts (l. 6) (not Philpot), bishop of Exeter from 1831, was a militant Tory and High Church man. The reference in l. 7 is to lines by Wordsworth, written in 1816 after the battle of Waterloo,

But thy most dreaded instrument,  
In working out a pure intent,  
Is Man—arrayed for mutual slaughter,  
—Yea, Carnage is thy daughter!

The peccant lines were dropped out of a later edition in 1845.

PAGE 79. MALVOLIO. The references to the daffodil, the daisy, and the nightingale seem to make it clear that Malvolio was meant for Wordsworth. Presumably Landor took the name from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, but connected it in his mind with the word *malevolent*.

PAGE 80. ON SHELLEY AND KEATS. Keats died at Rome in 1821. Pisa is on the Arno in NW. Italy, Lucca to the north of it, on the Serchio. Shelley was mainly at Pisa from 1819, and went from there to Lerici near Spezia on the coast. He was drowned, sailing from Leghorn to Spezia, on 8 July 1822. The body of Keats and the ashes of Shelley, who was cremated, are buried in cemeteries at Rome, near the pyramid tomb of Caius Cestius, a Roman priest who died c. 12 B.C.

PAGE 81. ON CHARLES LAMB. The 'mourner' (i) was Lamb's sister Mary. *Elia* (ii) was Lamb's pen-name.

PAGE 82. TO JOHN FORSTER. Forster (1812-76) was an historian and journalist, whom Landor first met in 1836. From 1847 to 1855 he edited *The Examiner*, to which Landor con-

tributed, and in 1869 wrote a *Life of Landor*. Sir John Eliot (1592-1632), John Hampden (1594-1634) and Oliver Cromwell (ll. 8-10) were parliamentary opponents of Charles I. The Cecropian heights (l. 13) were those of Athens, of which Cecrops was the legendary founder. The conspirator (l. 16) was Marcus Junius Brutus, who held down Julius Caesar at his assassination, and to whom Caesar said *Et tu, Brute!* The Sacred Way (l. 23) is that through Rome from the Forum to the Capitol. The Tritons, in Greek mythology, were mermen. For Cymodameia *vide* ENALLOS AND CYMODAMEIA (p. 5).

PAGE 83. ON THOMAS HOOD. Hood (1799-1845) was a writer of light poetry, both humorous and pathetic.

PAGE 83. TO ROBERT BROWNING. For Sorrento and Amalfi (l. 10) *vide* note to LINES ON TORQUAY (p. 40).

PAGE 85. LEOFRIC AND GODIVA. Leofric (ob. 1057) was Earl of Mercia. In 1043 he had founded the Benedictine monastery in Coventry at the request of his wife Godiva. The story of her ride unclothed through the town, imposed by Leofric as the condition of his freeing it from toll, was told by Roger of Wendover (ob. 1237). A show, representing it, was instituted at Coventry in 1678.

PAGE 91. ROGER ASCHAM AND LADY JANE GREY. Lady Jane was a cousin of Edward VI. In 1553 she married Lord Guilford Dudley, whose father, John, Duke of Northumberland, had persuaded the King to sign an instrument which purported to make her his successor, in place of his sister Mary. On his death, during the same year, Mary's supporters rose in arms, and Jane's father, the Duke of Suffolk, made her waive her claim. She was kept in confinement for a time, then arraigned for high treason, and executed in 1554. Roger Ascham (1515-68) was a Greek scholar, of St. John's College, Cambridge. In his *The Scholemaster* (publ. 1570), he describes a visit to her in 1550, at which he was impressed by her learning, in Greek as well as Latin. Hence Landor's references (p. 93) to the writings of the Roman orator Cicero (106-43 B.C.) and the Greek writers Polybius, an historian (c. 202-120 B.C.), Plutarch, a biographer and philosopher (A.D. 46-c. 120) and Epictetus, a philosopher (A.D. 60-140).

PAGE 94. LORD BROOKE AND SIR PHILIP SIDNEY. Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554-1628) was an early friend of Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86), who dwelt at Penshurst (l. 2) in Kent. The *Via Sacra* (p. 97) was that from the Forum to the Capitol in Rome. Alexander III of Macedonia conquered Persia in 331-327 B.C. (p. 99).

PAGE 111. EDMUND SPENSER AND THE EARL OF ESSEX. The

poet Edmund Spenser (1552?-99) went to Ireland in 1580 as secretary to Arthur, Lord Grey of Wilton, then recently appointed Lord Deputy there. Later he held various official posts, and acquired property, including in 1591 Kilcoman Castle in County Cork, near the river Awley, which he called in verse the Mulla (p. 115). In 1594 he married Elizabeth Boyle. In 1598 came the revolt of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, during which Kilcoman was taken and burnt over Spenser's head. It is Ben Jonson who says that one of Spenser's children perished in the flames. Spenser went on official business to London, and died there. It is in 1598 that Landor puts his dialogue. According to Ben Jonson, the death was due to starvation, and when Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (1566-1601) sent him in his last hours twenty pieces, he refused, saying he had no time to spend them. Certainly he knew Essex, for a marriage at whose house in 1596 he wrote his *Prothalamion*, and who in fact paid the expenses of his funeral. Essex was then expecting his own appointment as Deputy in Ireland. The Hanse towns (p. 114) were a group of north German cities, holding a practical monopoly of the Baltic trade. William Cecil, Lord Burghley (1520-98) was long Elizabeth's chief minister (pp. 114, 117). Sir Walter Raleigh (1552?-1618) was courtier, poet, and sea-captain (pp. 114, 117, 119). Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532-88), was long a favourite of Queen Elizabeth. We do not know when Sidney, the 'Philip' of p. 116 (cf. note to BROOKE AND SIDNEY) became Spenser's 'earliest friend'. It was not later than 1578 when Spenser was in the household of Sidney's uncle Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and both poets belonged to a literary club which they called the Areopagus. Sir Walter Raleigh (1552?-1618) was on bad terms with Essex from 1596 to 1601, when Essex was executed. Perhaps Landor (p. 117) rather antedates this. Titus (p. 114), son of the Emperor Vespasian of Rome, and himself emperor (A.D. 79-81), took the city of Jerusalem. The event was commemorated in the Arch of Titus on the *Via Sacra* in Rome. In Judaea he loved Berenice, daughter of King Herod Agrippa, but dismissed her in deference to Roman opinion.

PAGE 120. YOUNG WELLERBY. Landor puts this imaginary story into the mouth of Shakespeare, as heard from an equally imaginary Dr. Glaston. Godstow is on the Thames,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Oxford. Rosamund Clifford, a mistress of Henry II, was buried there. The Cherwell is a tributary of the Thames, running by Oxford.

PAGE 122. PELEUS AND THETIS. This story is linked with

those of ACHILLES AND HELENA (p. 126) and IPHIGENEIA (p. 14). All are related to that of the siege of Troy, as told by Homer (9th cent. B.C.) in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and elaborated by later writers. Troy, on the site of the modern Hissarlik, was a Phrygian city, near the river Scamander, in the north part of the coast of Asia Minor. Traditionally it was founded by Dardanus, son of Zeus, from whom was descended Tros, who gave his name to the town, and Priam, its king at the time of the siege. Among his sons were Hector and Paris. Anchises, the father of Aeneas, was his cousin. Peleus was the son of Aeacus, King of Aegina, whose troops, created out of ants, were the Myrmidons. He went to Pthia in Thessaly, where he was attacked on Mt. Pelion by wild beasts, whom he defeated with a potent knife, which he had lost, but recovered through the centaur Chiron. Thessaly is also called Aemaltia, and in it are the town Larissa and the rivers Apidanus and Enipeus. Thetis was the daughter of the sea-god Nereus. Zeus loved her, but learnt from Prometheus, who signifies Forethought, that he would have a son, who would destroy him. Thetis was therefore married to Peleus. Their son was Achilles, who took the Myrmidons to the siege of Troy by the Greeks, which lasted for ten years. His mother Thetis had tried to conceal him, but he was discovered by Odysseus, son of Laertes, King of Ithaca. Thetis therefore plunged him in the waters of the Styx, which made him invulnerable, except for the heel by which he was held. The Greek expedition had been brought about by Paris, who had abducted Helena, the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, on the Euratas in Laconia. She was the daughter of Zeus and Leda, and had brothers Castor and Polydeuces. The Greeks were led by Agamemnon, King of Argos, and brother of Menelaus. On their delay, weatherbound at Aulis, *vide* note on IPHIGENEIA (p. 14). In the last years of the siege there was a plague in the Greek camp at Sigeum. The seer Calchas said that, to stop it, Agamemnon must restore a girl Chryseis, whom he had taken, to her father, a priest of Apollo. Agamemnon consented, but took instead Briseis, a girl claimed by Achilles. A disgruntled Achilles sulked in his tent. His friend Patroclus, however, persuaded him to let the Myrmidons continue the fight. The Trojans were defeated, but Hector killed Patroclus. In anger Achilles left his tent and killed Hector. Later he was himself killed, by an arrow in his unprotected heel. The siege was finally ended by a device of Odysseus, son of Laertes, King of Ithaca, who brought into the city, under the pretence of a gift to its goddess Athena, a wooden horse full of armed men, who overmastered the defenders. Priam



was slain by Neoptolemus, also called Pyrrhus, son of Achilles. Later, on his voyage back to Ithaca, Odysseus saw Achilles in Hades. PELEUS AND THETIS has some incidental references not connected with its main theme. Elysium (p. 125) is the home of the righteous in Hades. Tethys (p. 125) is a sea-deity, the wife of the Titan Oceanus, and the Tritons (p. 126) are mermen. The 'monster of Calydon' (p. 125) in Aetolia was a boar, slain by Meleager, with whom, in one version of the story, was Peleus. Aeolus (p. 126) was a god of winds.

PAGE 126. ACHILLES AND HELENA. This is an imaginative addition of Landor's own to the Trojan story. He places the scene on Mt. Ida, not that in Crete, but another in Asia Minor, whence, in Homer, the Gods watch the battle for Troy. Here was a cult of Cybele (p. 132), an Asiatic goddess, identified by the Greeks with Rhea, wife of the Titan Cronus and mother of Zeus. Capaneus (p. 127) was one of seven heroes, who warred against Thebes, and was there struck with lightning by Zeus. Typhoeus (p. 127) was a serpent-headed monster, thrown into Tartarus, the worst part of Hades, by Zeus. Narcissus (p. 129) was a youth who rejected the nymph Echo. Aphrodite made him fall in love with his own image in a fountain. After death he became a flower. This, too, was the fate of Hyacinthus (p. 129), killed by Zephyrus, the spirit of the west wind. Atreus (p. 130) was the father of Agamemnon and Menelaus. Nestor (p. 130) was King of Pylos in the Peloponnese and a wise counsellor of the Greeks. Iris (p. 130) was the spirit of the rainbow and a messenger of the gods. Phasis (p. 131) was a town in Colchis near the Euxine Sea. For the Calydonian hunt, *vide* notes on PELEUS AND THETIS. The Fauns (p. 132) were spirits of the countryside, and the Satyrs similar beings, companions of the God Dionysus.

PAGE 132. ORATION OF PERICLES TO THE SOLDIERS ROUND SAMOS. On the nature of *Pericles and Aspasia*, *vide* Introduction. Pericles (c. 500-429 B.C.) was the greatest of Athenian statesmen. Aspasia, a courtesan from Miletus on the Meander in the Ionian district of the coast of Asia Minor, became his faithful consort. Of other contributors to the letters, the most frequent are Cleone, a supposed friend of Aspasia at Miletus, and Anaxagoras (500-428 B.C.), in whom Landor is said to have thought that he was depicting himself. The character and oratory of Pericles made him the dominant figure in Athens from about 460. He was on friendly terms with the chief poets and philosophers of the day. It was his ambition to make Athens an ideal democracy and the leader of Greece, but he was throughout hampered by the jealousy of Sparta. Under him the Delian confederacy of Ionian states, founded

in 478 to combat the Persian invasions, became practically an Athenian empire. He subdued a revolt of the island of Samos, off the coast of Asia Minor, in 439, but in 431 was faced with the Peloponnesian war, in which Sparta led the southern and western cities of Greece against Athens. Attica was invaded. The political opponents of Pericles took the opportunity to attack him. With some difficulty he held his own, but the war was still in progress when he died in 429. The Agora (p. 132) was the assembly place at Athens. Byzantion (p. 132) is the modern Constantinople. Persia (p. 133) became a powerful empire in the sixth century B.C. under Cyrus, who conquered the Greek cities in Asia Minor. Darius (521-486 B.C.) planned to extend his dominion to Greece itself. Encouraged by Hippias, son of the Athenian tyrant Peisistratus, he invaded Attica, but was defeated by Miltiades at Marathon (490). Miltiades was later impeached for an unsuccessful attack on the island of Paros in the Cyclades, and died in prison (489). In 480 Xerxes, the son of Darius, made a new attempt to conquer Greece. After some initial success his fleet was defeated (480) near the island of Salamis, off the coast of Attica, and his land forces (479) by the Spartan Pausanias and the Athenian Aristides at Plataea in Boeotia. Aristides had earlier been banished for a time from Athens for political reasons, but had been allowed to return.

PAGE 134. ORATION OF PERICLES ON THE APPROACH OF THE LACEDAEMONIANS TO ATHENS. This is supposed to be spoken in 431 B.C. when Archidamus of Sparta, also called Lacedaemon, invaded Attica. Corcyra (p. 134) is the modern Corfu, an island north-west of Greece. The Piraeus (p. 134) was the harbour of Athens. Megara (p. 134) was a town on the Isthmus of Corinth, between the Peloponnese and Attica. The Protectress of our city was Athena.

PAGE 136. PERICLES ON HIS LIFE. This speech is put at the time of the death of Pericles (429 B.C.). The reminiscences of Miltiades and Aristides go back to his early years. The rest is in effect a bead-roll of the great men whom he had known. Pindar (c. 522-442 B.C.) was a lyric poet. Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.), Sophocles (496-406 B.C.), and Euripides (c. 480-406 B.C.) were dramatists. Herodotus (c. 480-c. 425 B.C.), and Thucydides (c. 460-c. 400 B.C.) were historians. Phidias (c. 500-432 B.C.) was a sculptor. Damon, Anaxagoras (c. 500-428 B.C.), Empedocles (c. 490-c. 444 B.C.), Protagoras (c. 485-c. 411 B.C.), and Democritus (c. 460-361 B.C.) were philosophers. Acron (n. c. 490 B.C.) and Hippocrates (460-357 B.C.) were physicians. Meton was an astronomer.

PAGE 138. THE COUNSELS OF ANAXAGORAS. Lampsacus is a town of Asia Minor, on the Hellespont, now the Dardanelles. At Dodona (p. 139) in Epirus, a district in north-west Greece, oracles were delivered from a shrine of Zeus.

PAGE 140. ASPASIA TO CLEONE. This is imaginative. Leuconœ probably only exists in some verses, here referred to, of Landor's own. Hermesionax, however, appears to have been of Colophon in Asia Minor.

PAGE 142. THE DEATH OF ACCIAIOLI. This and the two DREAMS which follow, are from *The Pentameron*, suggested by the *Decameron* of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75), the scene of which has been placed at Landor's own Villa Gherardesca (*vide* note on MY HOMES, p. 33). Francesco Petrarca (1304-74) pays Boccaccio a visit at Certaldo, between Florence and Siena. The talk is largely about Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) but it strays to other topics, and some humorous incidents of life at Certaldo are interspersed. Niccolo Acciaiolì was the seneschal of Joanna I (1343-82), Queen of Naples, near which are Sorrento and Amalfi, on a promontory between the gulfs of Naples and Salerno. Certosa (p. 143) is the Italian name for a Carthusian monastery. The one intended is on the Arno near Florence, of which Niccolo Acciaiolì was the founder.

PAGE 143. THE DREAM OF BOCCACCIO. Maria, daughter of King Robert of Naples, was beloved and sung of by Boccaccio, who called her Fiametta, and Laura de Noves by Petrarch. Posilippo and Baia are on the coast near Naples.

PAGES 150-3. WISDOM OF LIFE AND DEATH. i-v. These passages are from the *Conversation* of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), orator and statesman at Rome, and his brother Quintus Tullius. The Elysian meadows (p. 151), in Greek mythology, were the home of the righteous in Hades. The Capitol was the fortress and the Forum the assembly place in Rome.

PAGE 151. WISDOM. ii. For the Epicureans, *vide* note on vi-viii *infra*.

PAGE 153. WISDOM. vi-viii. These passages are from the *Conversation* of Epicurus, Leontion, and Ternissa. Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) was a philosopher, who taught in a garden at Athens, and based his moral doctrine on pleasure, which he believed only to be secured by plain living and the practice of virtue. Leontion seems to be traceable as a member of his school, but the name of Ternissa is probably taken from the poetess (*vide* note on p. 16).

PAGE 156. WISDOM. xvi. Landor was devoted to nightingales. From Llanthony he wrote to Southey in 1811, 'I have made a discovery, which is, that there are both nightingales

and glowworms in my valley. I would give two or three thousand pounds less for a place that was without them.'

PAGE 157. WISDOM. xix. Barbary is a name for North Africa. Pratolino seems to be a diminutive for Prato. For Fiesole and Doccia, *vide* note on MY HOMES, p. 33).

PAGE 158. WISDOM. xx. This passage is from the *Conversation* of Aesop, a Greek writer of fables (6th cent. B.C.) and Rhodope, who had been his fellow slave in Thrace. Laodamia was the wife of Protesilaus, the first Greek to land from his ship for the siege of Troy (*vide* note on PELEUS AND THETIS, p. 122). He was killed in doing so. The gods allowed him to return to his wife for three hours, at the end of which she took her own life. Wordsworth has a poem on the story. Amaranth which means 'everlasting' was the name of a poetic flower. *Vide* Milton's *Lycidas* (149-51).

Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,  
And Daffodillies fill their cups with tears,  
To strew the Laureat Herse where *Lycid* lies.

Here Jupiter stands for Zeus.

PAGE 159. WISDOM. xxi. Michael Angelo, sculptor and painter (1475-1564), met Vittoria Colonna, widow of the Marquis of Pescara at Rome in 1534. He loved her, and wrote sonnets on her after her death in 1547.

PAGE 160. ON LITERATURE. i. For the Trojan references, *vide* note on PELEUS AND THETIS (p. 122). Minerva (l. 17) was an Italian goddess, identified with Athena.

PAGE 161. ON LITERATURE. iv. Jacques Delille (1758-1813) was a bad French poet, whom Landor had met in Paris and London. Ossa is a mountain in Thessaly, near Olympus. The vale of Tempe lies between them. Tartary is a name for eastern Asia.

PAGE 162. ON LITERATURE. vii. The *Prometheus Vincitus* is a tragedy by Aeschylus.

PAGE 163. ON LITERATURE. viii. The oracular books ascribed to the Cumæan Sibyl were preserved in the Capitol of Rome, but burnt with it in 83 B.C.

PAGE 165. ON LITERATURE. xiv. Momus, the son of night in Greek mythology, was regarded as the personification of mockery.

PAGE 167. ON HIMSELF. ii. For the pyramid of Cestius *vide* note to ON SHELLEY AND KEATS (p. 80).

PAGE 168. ON HIMSELF. v. The 'dead man' is Southey, whose son published his *Life and Correspondence* in 1849-50.

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